

The Nation.

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EDITORIAL

NO EASY EXIT FROM LEBANON

The Middle East is a region of mirage and quicksand which draws foolhardy adventurers into perilous predicaments from which no easy exit is available. The latest victim is the United States, which moved troops into Lebanon last summer as peacekeepers, and is now trapped as a co-belligerent in the unending civil war.

The Marines were first sent to Lebanon (along with Italian and French contingents) to stabilize the situation after Israel got bogged down in its invasion drive. President Reagan promised Yasir Arafat that after Palestinian fighters quit Beirut, the Marines would withdraw but the United States would guarantee the safety of the Moslem refugee camps. Then came the Sabra and Shatila massacres, and Reagan had to redeploy the troops.

After the Marines were sent back, the U.S. mission began to change from mere peacekeeping to military support of the Christian Phalangist regime and army. Israel was never sanguine about the American presence (it prefers weak and divided neighbors), and after Reagan's various unrealistic proposals for peace failed, it withdrew to a defensible line in southern Lebanon, there to consolidate its conquests.

Immediately, the civil fighting intensified, as Syria and the Lebanese Moslems began to assert their claims. Marines were killed; more were dispatched. It is hard to see how they can leave: their removal would surely trigger a larger war, but their presence cannot end the strife.

The President must now decide whether to invoke the War Powers Act and call the intervention by its rightful name. But if he does so, only a semantic problem would be solved. The current civil strife in Lebanon rests on the fundamental conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, exploited by the superpowers for their own purposes, and until that is confronted, all the belligerents will sink deeper into the sand.

THE C.I.A.,
THE A.C.L.U. &
THE F.O.I.A.

Angus
Mackenzie

Morton H.
Halperin
Allan Adler

WHILE
SOMEONE ELSE
IS EATING—IV
Earl Shorris

THE POLITICS
OF SEXUALITY
Barbara
Ehrenreich

WHO WAS
THAT MASKED
IMPERIALIST?
Lewis Hyde

LETTER TO AMERICA

ON PEACE, POWER AND PAROCHIALISM

E.P. THOMPSON

There are two ways into the disarmament argument. One is from the globe itself: the threat to the species, the ecological imperative of survival. The other is from the injury done to people by the deformations, whether economic or cultural, of their own war-directed societies. And the problem is this: both arguments are being won, yet none of the structures of power have been shifted an inch by argument, and not one missile has been stopped in its tracks.

Two recent books encapsulate those arguments. The dangers to the biosphere posed by nuclear war are discussed in *The Aftermath*,* a collection of studies originally published as a special issue of *Ambio*, the journal of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. The papers set forth the consequences of nuclear war in epidemiological terms, its effects on the ozone layer, on global food supplies and fresh water, on ocean ecosystems and on much else.

The message has been delivered before, though never with such expertise. No serious attempt can be made to refute it. There can no longer be any doubt that the procurers of nuclear weapons threaten the human species and almost every other species besides. Yet the procurers continue with their business, and simply enlarge their public relations staffs to handle meddlesome scientists, bishops, doctors and peace movements. Where we had only an arms race five years ago, we have an apologetics race today as well.

Beyond Survival,* edited by Michael Albert and David Dellinger, documents the social consequences of nuclear madness. It addresses the

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LETTERS.

THE ETHICS OF ANTHROPOLOGY

New York City

Readers of *The Nation* are accustomed to the vilification of scholars whose work results in the implementation of damnable policies (a Jeane Kirkpatrick, a Milton Friedman), and rightly so. Anthropologists, however, are a group whose work is ordinarily so far from the centers of power that it is truly surprising to find them placed in the same company.

Despite Jeffrey Lincoln's claim ["Steven Mosher and the Politics of Cultural Exchange," *The Nation*, Sept. 3-10] that Stanford University sacrificed Steven Mosher to America's China policy, the fact is that Mosher was expelled from the Ph.D. program in anthropology by a unanimous vote of the department of anthropology, not by the university. Lincoln never addresses the question of how it was possible for these professors to achieve such unanimity. I know no more of the facts in this case than anyone else; but I do know something of the history of anthropology, and I cannot believe that it is not relevant to this case.

Anthropology is by its nature a discipline ill at ease with itself. Anthropologists, precisely because they are not political scientists or economists, tend to do their research among working people, peasants and tribespeople, those who are most vulnerable in a given society, and most likely to suffer from policy decisions. Anthropologists' research, because it deals with those who are vulnerable, is liable to co-optation, and the discipline has struggled to prevent such abuse since at least World War I. Connections between military operations and anthropological research in Southeast Asia led to enormous turmoil within the field in the early 1970s and to a renewed commitment by anthropologists to insure the security and privacy of the people with whom they work.

As unhappy as I am with the handling of the Mosher case, I cannot digest an article on it that ignores the fact that the decision to expel Mosher was made by anthropologists on the basis of his flouting of a code of ethics that anthropologists take very seriously. Without evidence to the contrary—and there seems to be none—I find it hard to believe that all the members of the department could agree on such a matter unless they were acting as anthropologists, not as toadies of the State Department.

One does not have to countenance forced abortions to feel that the publication of the victims' pictures in Taiwan was a gross violation of their rights, nor applaud a nation's civil rights record in order to object to an anthropologist's "deliberate disregard for the law of the host country [and] a manipulative approach toward the people with whom he was living and working" (from the report of the Stanford review committee). This be-

havior is at extreme variance with a code of ethics holding that the safety and privacy of the informant are more important than the research itself. It is ironic that a stand on principle should bring such charges of unprincipledness.

Glenn Petersen

Professor of Anthropology
Baruch College

LINCOLN REPLIES

New York City

Glenn Petersen's criticisms revolve around my depiction of the events that culminated in Steven Mosher's expulsion from Stanford. As I argued in the article, the ethical concerns of Stanford's anthropology department are not the central issue. What is important are the political forces that prompted Mosher's dismissal. Mosher was the victim of a variety of vested interests that saw him as a threat to cultural exchange programs between the United States and China. Those interests moved quickly and effectively to remove that threat. As my article pointed out, pro-China forces in the State Department (which have been enormously successful in safeguarding U.S. relations with the People's Republic) see those programs as an important component of a broad diplomatic effort to enmesh the Chinese politically, economically and culturally in the affairs of the West. Stanford's interests are also clear: it is the leading institution conducting scholarly exchanges with the Chinese, and as a result it has gained considerable academic and political prestige.

Professor Petersen is reluctant to accept this scenario, stating he has trouble "digesting" my article. He says that "the fact is that Mosher was expelled from the Ph.D. program in anthropology by a unanimous vote of the department of anthropology, not by the university," and that I "never addressed the question of how it was possible for these professors to achieve such unanimity."

My response to both criticisms is simple. It is fallacious to absolve the university from complicity in the effort to expel Mosher. The fact is that there is *no provision under Stanford University rules* that would allow the anthropology department to set up an ad hoc investigative committee to conduct an ad hoc investigation using its own ad hoc procedures. The anthropology department was allowed to conduct such an unprecedented inquiry only with the consent of the university administration. Those are the grounds upon which Mosher appealed the department's decision, which the administration upheld.

Petersen also points to the department's unanimous vote as proof of its validity. Clifford Barnett, chairman of the department, used the same specious argument in a letter to *The New York Times*. The simple reality is that everybody who testified before the de-

partment's committee was prejudiced against Mosher. This produced a large amount of unfavorable "evidence" against him. Even Barnett admitted to me in a telephone interview this spring, "Yes, it's true that everybody had an ax to grind with Mosher." The inevitable decision of the committee, and by rubber stamp the rest of the anthropology department, to expel Mosher is hardly an example of careful jurisprudence.

Petersen accuses me of ignoring the fact that "the decision to expel Mosher was made by anthropologists on the basis of his flouting of a code of ethics that anthropologists take very seriously." Mosher was accused by the Chinese of a variety of improprieties, including bringing a van into China without permission, hiring a research assistant without permission, trying to smuggle antique coins out of the country and traveling to restricted areas. The Chinese, as well as many Stanford anthropologists, were also upset by the article Mosher published in a Taiwanese magazine. It is important to note that these are *not* the reasons Mosher was dismissed, as the anthropology department has reluctantly admitted.

The reasons for his expulsion are contained in a "secret" report that the department refuses to make public on the ground that its disclosure might be injurious to innocent third parties. This remains the situation, despite the fact that several department members have confided to various sources that it is extremely unlikely that any injury would occur. Why doesn't Mosher release the report himself, since he has a copy? He argues, on advice from his lawyer, that he would be disseminating slanders against himself, which might undermine any legal action he might undertake.

Thus, it is impossible for Petersen to state that "the decision to expel Mosher was made by anthropologists on the basis of his flouting of a code of ethics that anthropologists take very seriously," because he cannot possibly know the nature of Mosher's "flouting." Clearly the burden is on Stanford to release the report and come clean. That, however, seems unlikely, because, as I have argued, the anthropology department did not act properly and fairly in dealing with Steven Mosher.

Finally, I never said that Stanford anthropologists acted as "toadies of the State Department." Rather, I said that both "the State Department and Stanford have reason to be pleased with the outcome of the affair." By that statement I simply meant to point out that both the State Department and Stanford had considerable interests at stake that were safeguarded as a result of Mosher's expulsion and the fact that he was prevented by the State Department from testifying before the Senate East Asia Subcommittee.

Jeffrey Lincoln

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EDITORIALS.

Truth Shot Down

It must be that the American press, public and political establishment take secret pleasure in suffering the persistent, pervasive lies of their government. What else but a diagnosis of mass informational masochism could explain the credulous acceptance of Washington's official line on the South Korean airliner attack? The inconsistencies, half-truths, deceptions, cover-ups and outright falsehoods of the Reagan version were obvious from the start. But even if the story had been flawlessly crafted, the history of governmental mendacity over the last thirty years,

at least, should have alerted everyone to the likelihood of deceit.

We know that the Soviet leadership lies shamelessly to its people. What we refuse to grasp is that our own leaders are also masters of deceit. We were told lies about Vietnam, lies about the Bay of Pigs, lies about Cambodia, Angola and Nicaragua, lies about Guatemala in 1954 and Guatemala in 1983, lies about U-2 flights, RC-135 missions, Watergate burglaries, tape-gaps, nuclear safety, subversion, Agent Orange, oil crises. Why should we take at face value or on blind faith anything the government tells us when it feels that national security, political virtue or private profits are at stake?

Last week *The Nation* raised several questions about the flight of K.A.L. 007, its rendezvous with an RC-135 spy plane near Sakhalin Island and the role of Japanese and U.S. intelligence monitors in the entire episode. None of those questions have been answered by Administration officials. The press has continued to turn out oceans of copy, but for the most part it treats the Russian attack as a barbarous massacre or an idiotic blunder. When, ten days after the plane was shot down, the State Department released a "revised" transcript of intercepted Soviet communications suggested that warning shots had been fired in advance of the final attack, *The New York Times* noted that the revision "provides possible but inconclusive substantiation" of the Soviet account. Perhaps. But more to the point, it provided conclusive substantiation of a brazen American deception and a massive cover-up.

Foreign journalists have not been so reticent about their suspicions of American and South Korean mischief. *The Sunday Times* of London stated last week that "there is now a growing conviction in military, political and aviation circles that [K.A.L.] Captain Byong-in was not in Soviet airspace by accident." The paper discounts the theory that the pilot was taking a shortcut to Seoul to save fuel; the savings would have amounted to about \$2,000—too small "to risk disaster deliberately."

The odds against the airliner's computerized navigational system malfunctioning with such exquisite symmetry as to steer it over the sensitive Russian military and telecommunications installations in the northwest Pacific are astronomical. It is possible that the pilot was simply trying to save time, but on the evidence it seems at least as likely that the plane was on some sort of reconnaissance mission, and that the American spy plane and the various remote monitoring systems were involved in the mission.

If that is true in any way—if the United States was actively or passively complicit in the overflight—then the government shares responsibility for the deaths of 269 people. They were not only innocent victims—but hapless hostages in a savage interchange of cold war provocations.

The human tragedy has a political dimension that may haunt the world long after the heat of the headlines has subsided. President Reagan's surprising temperance after the attack now seems calculated to advance his policies of military buildup and missile deployment. Although there is no logical connection between the airliner incident and European (or Far Eastern) security requirements, Reagan insists that the MX, the Pershing 2 and the cruise missiles must be installed. He has suggested that the K.A.L. massacre proves the implacable evil of the Soviet Empire, against which the only antidote is massed hardware.

But such a policy is a reckless flirtation with disaster. The truth is that the deployment of bigger and better missiles closer to Soviet cities and bases can only raise the kind of fears that lead to attacks on trespassers. The Russians may be too quick on the trigger, but their "paranoia," as the more thoughtful Pentagon spokesmen call it, has a grounding in reality.

If the K.A.L. tragedy teaches us anything, it is that the

United States, the Soviet Union and their allies and clients are cutting the fuses on their Doomsday devices too short. This is the time for disarmament, not missile rattling. President Reagan is still too flushed with his propaganda "victory" to reverse his response to the airliner affair, but Congress and public pressure could force a revision of the official version by launching a thorough investigation and taking a political stance against militarization.

The Movie Version

Harold Clurman, the distinguished theater critic of *The Nation* from 1953 until his death three years ago this week, made a posthumous appearance in the movie *Frances*. The dead can't sue, but several of his friends think the movie transformed a giant of the theater into a "sleaze pygmy," to use actress Kim Stanley's phrase. I agree. *Frances* libels Harold Clurman. Whatever the film's merits—mostly embodied in the performances of Jessica Lange as Frances Farmer and Stanley as her poor, mad, implacable mother—it comes a cropper in the brief but deadly scenes about Clurman, Clifford Odets and the Group Theatre. Deadly? Yes—stupid, inane, ham-handed and untruthful.

The first Odets-Clurman sequence is mild compared with what comes later in the picture. It is 1937 or thereabouts. Frances Farmer, the rebellious and stunning actress from Seattle, has ditched Hollywood to have a go at her art on the living stage back East. Fade in on a performance of *The Petrified Forest* at the Mt. Kisco Playhouse. Close-up of two oafish male faces exchanging significant glances. The men are supposed to be the playwright Clifford Odets and, raising his eyebrows, Harold Clurman—founder of the Group Theatre (though you wouldn't know it from this movie), director of Odets's *Awake and Sing* (also unmentioned) and all-round man of the theater.

The libel occurs after Farmer has joined the Group. She and Odets are lovers, and she is starring in his new play, *Golden Boy*, which is near the end of its smash run. The Group Theatre is about to send a company to London. Farmer, carrying a bunch of flowers, crosses Central Park West toward Odets's apartment house. Cut to the apartment, where Clurman is waiting alone, nursing a drink, leafing through a scrapbook.

"Where's Clifford?" she asks.

"He's not here," says Clurman heavily. "Bourbon?" He goes to the bar. "It's getting cold out, isn't it?"

Frances unwraps the flowers. "Pretty, aren't they?"

And so on and so forth, with a couple of pregnant "Um-hmmms" from Clurman, until at last comes the payoff: "Well, you see, that's the point, Frances—you're not going to London."

Shock. "Don't you think I'm good enough, Harold?"

Yes, of course, he says, but you see—"it's money." There's an actress, he tells her, an American actress living in London . . .

"A rich actress?"

"Yes. That's the deal. She plays Lorna Moon."

Terrible pause.

"What's Clifford say about this? He doesn't know, does he?"

"Frances," says Clurman, as he slowly, portentously pulls a green envelope out of his breast pocket, "he knows. He approved it." He hands her the envelope. He takes her by the shoulders. "Frances," he says, "you have done a great service for the Group Theatre . . ."

"What am I going to do now?" she cries.

"Hollywood wants you, Frances," says TV actor Jordan Charney, raising his eyebrows, impersonating Harold Clurman.

"Prick," she says, and throws her drink in his face.

Cut to Frances alone in her bedroom, drinking, Odets's note in hand. Cut to Sam Shepard as her friend Harry York, listening to her drunken, ravaged voice over long-distance telephone: "Two lines he writes to me, two fucking lines: 'This affair is now ended. My wife has returned from Europe.'"

The scene telescopes two discrete events: Farmer being bounced from the London production of *Golden Boy* and Farmer being bounced from her affair with Odets. In real life, a full year intervened between the first event (1938) and the second (1939), and though Clurman directed *Golden Boy*, he was not around when Farmer received Odets's note. According to Margaret Brenman-Gibson's *Clifford Odets: American Playwright*, Frances was alone in her room at the Laurelton Hotel, waiting to go to dinner with Odets, when the note arrived.

As for Farmer's ejection from the London cast of *Golden Boy*, here is Clurman's testimony, in *The Fervent Years*:

At this juncture the immediate next step in our task was to undertake a London trip. . . . An American actress living in London was anxious to play in *Golden Boy*. Furthermore, she was willing and had the means to finance the entire venture, even though we insisted we could remain in England for only a short period. Of course, we would not have considered such an offer if Frances Farmer had not been under obligation to return for the summer to do a picture in Hollywood. But as we had been informed that the actress in London was a competent player, I did not think it too mean a compromise to make the deal, though one or two people informed me in no uncertain terms that this decision betrayed a thoroughgoing opportunism on my part.

Robert Lewis, actor, director, teacher and founding member of the Group Theatre, who played Roxy Gottlieb, the voluble fight promoter, in the original 1937 production of *Golden Boy* in New York, and subsequently in London, agreed: "That was always my understanding—that Frances was tied up in Hollywood."

"If Harold Clurman were alive to see *Frances*," Lewis said, "he would have thrown something at the screen. I almost walked out. All of that stuff is completely untrue. These people who made the picture didn't know the Group, didn't know Clurman, didn't know Odets, didn't know Farmer."

"I knew both Harold Clurman and Clifford Odets in-

timately," Margaret Brenman-Gibson told me. "I must say the film presents them both as the most venal assholes. O.K., poetic license—you do that in a drama. But what you *don't* do is turn a person of Harold's profundity into an oaf, smoking his cigar, seeking any way out. Harold was a person who has a significant place in the history of American dramaturgy. Here he's pretentious, tedious, boring—and Harold Clurman was *not* boring."

We'll give Kim Stanley the last word.

"I don't give interviews about *Frances*," she said over the telephone from California, "because I don't like so many things in *Frances*. But I've been waiting—just waiting—for someone to ask me about Harold Clurman. Harold Clurman and Clifford Odets were two very important men. But Harold especially—you cannot do that to Harold. The script itself is trash. You cannot make a sleaze pygmy out of Harold Clurman. . . . It's like using Joan of Arc as an extra in the life of Charles the Dauphin.

"It's all very complicated, but I do know one thing: wherever Harold is, he's laughing at the whole thing."

JERRY TALLMER

Jerry Tallmer, of The New York Post, followed Harold Clurman as winner of the George Jean Nathan Drama Criticism award.

AGENCY SUBSCRIPTION

We were intrigued to read in *The New York Times* that our old friend John Rees, who came to a sort of fame as a freelance informer on and infiltrator of New Left groups in the early 1970s [see Hillel Levin, "The 'Information Digest' Ploy," *The Nation*, October 7, 1978; and Frank Donner, "The Campaign to Smear the Nuclear Freeze Movement," November 6, 1982], has teamed up with Arnaud de Borchgrave and Robert Moss, co-authors of such right-wing fiction as *The Spike*. The three are going to publish a \$1,000-a-year monthly newsletter for "key decision-makers" who want to know about "matters of jugular concern," *The Times* reports. Drawing on "former intelligence officers, including ranking defectors from the K.G.B. and its proxy services and former government officials recently in sensitive positions," they intend to scoop the daily news media, and thus they call their newsletter "Early Warning."

"After studying our track record," de Borchgrave is reported to have written potential subscribers, "Bill Casey of the C.I.A. took out several subscriptions." A spokesman at the agency would neither confirm nor deny the report. However, if Casey hasn't subscribed, he ought to. The de Borchgrave-Moss brand of fiction should provide inspiration to the agency in concocting cover stories for bungled covert operations. And Rees could infiltrate the Republican National Committee and recover the ten-foot pole that Casey said he wouldn't touch the Debategate papers with.

MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

On August 9, a letter was smuggled out of a political detention center in Turkey. It has since been published quite extensively in Western Europe, but has met with utter indifference in the United States. This silence is odd, and rather disconcerting, because one of the signatories of the letter, Suleyman Demirel, is perhaps the most pro-American politician in modern Turkish politics. Six times Prime Minister since 1965, and a former employee of an American multinational, he was long regarded as the quintessential "Washington man" in the Turkish spectrum. Together with eight other right-wing civilian politicians (including former Foreign Minister Ihsan Caglayangil) and seven centrist ones (including former Finance Minister Deniz Baykal), Demirel denounced the impending elections as a fraud. He warned the United States not to stay neutral in Turkey's "war between militarism and democracy" and questioned whether a democratic Turkey would or could stay in the Western camp after the experience of an American-armed and American-backed dictatorship.

Words were not minced in the letter, which exposes him and his co-signers to great danger. This November, wrote Demirel, "the Turkish people will vote only for the candidates selected by the junta." This "is an insult to the country, to the nation and to the Turkish armed forces. . . . Turkey is not Pakistan. We are not looking for a Zia ul-Haq. Turkey throughout its history has never become a colony." Turkey, he added, "has been pushed into a heavier crisis than it was before September 12 1980 [the date of the military coup]."

Turkey is a member of NATO and a candidate for membership in the European Common Market. It is also the third largest recipient of U.S. military aid. The dictatorship in Ankara has been viewed with amazing leniency by the American press and by Congress, partly because the junta seemed to put an end to terrorism, which had claimed up to twenty-five street deaths a week before the *putsch*. What seems not to have occurred to many people is that many of the terrorists (including the Gray Wolf neo-Nazis, from whose ranks Mehmet Ali Agca was recruited) were doing what they were doing *in order to bring about a coup*. What need now of their squads and bullets? In addition, and because of the now nearly complete press censorship, we have no means of knowing what goes on in the sticks (such as the Kurdish provinces). Such reports as have reached this country indicate no slackening in violence against the left, the trade unions, the Kurds and other dissenters.

Now let us shift the scene to Washington. Here, the Turkish Ambassador, Sukru Elekdag, is quite a potentate. He is famous for his diplomatic and social skills, and for his ability to get Richard Perle (Assistant Secretary of Defense) and Richard Burt (Assistant Secretary of State) to jump through hoops in order to eat out of his hand. Elekdag is also widely praised for being good with the press—though he may have gone too far in telling Richard Cohen of *The Washington Post* that there has never been any genocide of Turkish

Armenians. Together with his opposite number, Robert Strausz-Hupé, American Ambassador in Ankara, Elekdag has succeeded in evolving a "special relationship" between Washington and his military employers. U.S. aid to Turkey is almost at the \$1 billion mark—rivaling that bestowed on Israel and Egypt—and is rising. When the generals need a lobbyist on the Hill, Perle is usually on hand. He recently staged a *coup de théâtre* (gentler than the military kind but just as effective) before a Senate subcommittee. He asked the senators to hear of Turkey's military needs in closed session, lest public presentation should give encouragement to the Soviet Union. The Russians, of course, know Turkey's military layout very well (and supply a fair bit of the Turks' matériel). Congress duly came across.

The game, as in other such cases, is "assurances." In return for a cornucopia of American aid, the Turkish regime comes to the Hill and promises "progress" on internal democracy, on ending the military occupation of Cyprus and on measures to repay its enormous debt. The whole show has taken on an aspect similar to Ronald Reagan's periodic certification of El Salvador.

It happens that I have been able to test one of Ambassador Elekdag's "assurances" firsthand. Ismet Imset is a young Turkish journalist who is employed in Ankara by United Press International. Earlier this year, he applied for a passport in order to attend a U.P.I. training course in London. When he presented himself at the relevant police station, he was blindfolded, beaten over a period of three hours and threatened with electric shock treatment. Since then, he has been repeatedly warned of the consequences of writing anything critical of the junta. His stories about human rights have got him into serious trouble, and he was forbidden to report, most recently, the Demirel protest. In effect, his professional life has been abolished, and his physical life put under continual threat. This, you may think, is a bizarre way for a mendicant NATO government to treat a reporter for an American news organization.

Before me is a letter from Ambassador Elekdag to Representative Stephen Solarz. Solarz is perhaps Turkey's most assiduous friend on the legislative side, and naturally a letter from him about the Imset case was taken seriously. In plain words, the Turkish Ambassador states that "Mr. Imset will be granted a passport to travel abroad." The date on the letter is April 13. Since that date, Imset has been threatened anew, forbidden to leave the country and prevented from reporting to the outside world. And the U.S. government has increased its subventions to the generals in Ankara while expressing utter and credulous confidence in their democratic intentions. This may seem an arcane topic in a week of heightened and broadened international tension, but the creation of an unstable NATO dictatorship on the Soviet border doesn't seem a small thing to me, nor does the persecution of a journalist, working for an American outfit, by a regime which gets such lavish American support. Before the rigged elections take place it would be good to bear in mind what Turkish government assurances are actually worth.

ARTICLES.

■ A C.I.A.-A.C.L.U. DEAL?

The Operational Files Exemption

ANGUS MACKENZIE

The American Civil Liberties Union, the Central Intelligence Agency and Senate Intelligence Committee chairman Barry Goldwater have become strange bedfellows in the latest effort to exempt the agency from the Freedom of Information Act—Senate bill 1324. Although the A.C.L.U., the C.I.A. and the senators will be nit-picking over the language of the bill during the markup sessions, which begin in the coming weeks, they have already agreed on its key provision, which exempts the agency's "operational files" from F.O.I.A. search and disclosure requirements.

S. 1324 is a revision of a bill proposed in 1979 by then-C.I.A. Deputy Director Frank C. Carlucci, which the A.C.L.U. opposed at the time. The new version was drawn up by the C.I.A.'s legal representatives in cooperation with Senator Goldwater. It was introduced in Congress after the A.C.L.U. informally agreed to the operational-files exemption.

The A.C.L.U. and the C.I.A. claim that the exemption would not expand the C.I.A.'s authority to withhold documents. Under the F.O.I.A., the agency may deny requests for information that relates to national security matters or that reveals confidential sources and investigative techniques. They contend that since operational files invariably contain such information, they are never released. Freeing the agency of the requirement that it conduct time-consuming searches of files that are never released, proponents say, would enable it to process other F.O.I.A. requests more expeditiously.

Critics of the proposed legislation counter that the term "operational files" is so broadly defined that it will amount to a total exemption from the F.O.I.A., permitting the agency to cover up illegal domestic spying and other wrongdoing. Many information act experts say the C.I.A. has taken the A.C.L.U. for a ride.

The deal between the C.I.A. and the A.C.L.U. was initially discussed in informal conversations between the agency's Deputy Counsel, Ernest Mayerfeld, and A.C.L.U. attorney Mark H. Lynch, who have been friendly enemies in F.O.I.A. court battles for seven years. As Lynch put it, "We're two guys who've spent a lot of time in court

together shooting the shit, and I've always told him if they get off the total exemption thing we might be able to work something out."

The basic elements of the agreement are that in exchange for the C.I.A.'s dropping its campaign for "the total exemption thing" and speeding up the processing of F.O.I.A. requests, the A.C.L.U. will not oppose the exemption of operational files in the agency's most sensitive departments.

Would the Senate bill cut off the flow of information on C.I.A. wrongdoing obtained through F.O.I.A. requests? On June 21, C.I.A. Deputy Director John N. McMahon told the Senate Intelligence Committee not to worry. "There will not ever again be a repeat of the improprieties of the past," he said. "And let me assure you that Bill Casey and I consider it our paramount responsibility that the rules and regulations not be violated."

Leaving aside the C.I.A.'s assurances that it will speed up the release of information, what does the bill itself say? The heart of the proposed legislation is the definition of "operational files." The agency and the A.C.L.U. agree that if the bill is passed, such files will no longer be subject to the search process—that they will be, in short, exempt from the F.O.I.A. But they disagree substantially over just what operational files are.

Mayerfeld told me that operational files deal with foreign intelligence, counterintelligence and counterterrorism operations; investigations to determine the suitability of potential foreign intelligence sources; "security liaison arrangements" with other intelligence agencies; and information exchanges with foreign governments. Mayerfeld's definition covers most of the agency's business, except—perhaps—intelligence reports derived from operational files. I say "perhaps" because some critics of the bill believe that even those reports could be exempt under the proposed legislation.

Let us examine some of Mayerfeld's categories. Take "counterintelligence operations," for example. Those operations include C.I.A. domestic spying, which President Reagan authorized in his executive order of December 4, 1981. If the Senate bill is passed, files on domestic spying could presumably be exempt from F.O.I.A. inquiries.

Files relating to past counterintelligence operations like Operation Chaos, which spied on the antiwar and civil rights movements and the underground press between 1967 and 1974, might also be exempt. Some of the activities carried out under Operation Chaos were revealed in 1976 by Senator Frank Church's Select Committee on Intelligence. And stories about the operation based on information obtained under the F.O.I.A. have appeared in the press. But the complete account has not emerged, and a C.I.A. source told my attorney that the agency has two roomfuls of unreleased Chaos files.

Opinion is divided on whether that material would be exempt under the Senate bill. Lynch told me the documents could be made public since Operation Chaos was the subject of a Congressional investigation and the House version of

Angus Mackenzie is an associate of the Center for Investigative Reporting, where he directs the Freedom of Information Project, which is co-sponsored by the Media Alliance.

the bill specifically provides for the release of such material (more on that later). Mayerfeld, however, was not so certain. He told me that whether Chaos files would be released "gets to be a complex question I can't answer."

Information about "counterterrorism operations" would also be exempt under Mayerfeld's reading of the bill, and the files on Operation Chaos could be included in that category. In 1974, Chaos merged with the International Terrorism Group, with the same chief, Richard Ober. Ober's group retained the Chaos files on more than 300,000 Americans. When I asked Mayerfeld if those files would be exempt, he refused to comment.

Files relating to "security liaison arrangements" with other intelligence agencies would also be exempt. Included in this category could be information about the extensive ties the C.I.A.'s Office of Security maintained with intelligence units of local police forces in the late 1960s and early 1970s. These local Red squads provided information that was used in Operation Chaos, among other things [see Philip Melanson, "The C.I.A.'s Secret Ties to Local Police," *The Nation*, March 26].

The C.I.A.'s cooperation with local police departments contravened the 1947 law establishing it, which provided that "the agency shall not have police, subpoena [sic], law-enforcement powers or internal-security functions." If those relationships with local law enforcement agencies continue, the public may never know, for the files on them could be exempt under S. 1324.

These examples are sufficient to show that the C.I.A. has a very broad definition of "operational files." The A.C.L.U.'s interpretation of the bill differs from the C.I.A.'s. According to Lynch, the Senate bill contains "no definition of operational files." Allan Adler, legislative counsel for the Center for National Security Studies, an A.C.L.U. project, said: "Operational files contain how the intelligence is gathered. You are not talking about intelligence itself." Adler's definition not only differs from the C.I.A.'s; it differs from those of other information specialists as well. For instance, Anna K. Nelson of the Organization of American Historians testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee that all C.I.A. files might be considered operational. "Is there any file of a government agency that does not deal with 'operations'?" she asked.

Adler told me that if the A.C.L.U. can win "pinned-down meanings of operational files," the bill will contain "no additional withholding authority" and the A.C.L.U. will support it. According to a spokesman for Senator Walter Huddleston, a member of the Intelligence Committee, when the A.C.L.U. was asked to submit revised wording for the bill, it declined, saying it supported the language in the House version of S. 1324, introduced by Romano Mazzoli of Kentucky. But the language in Mazzoli's bill is basically the same as that in the Senate bill.

Still, the A.C.L.U. says the Mazzoli bill is an improvement over the Senate version, which authorizes the director of central intelligence to determine which files are exempt from the F.O.I.A. That language was dropped from the House bill. However, Huddleston's spokesman said that the

omission "makes no difference"—that in both versions it is the C.I.A. that will decide which files are operational.

The Mazzoli bill "does preserve the right of search and review for subjects which have come under investigation for illegality," whether by Congress or the C.I.A., he added. That A.C.L.U.-suggested change is an important distinction between the two bills, except it is left to the C.I.A. to determine what constitutes the subject of an investigation.

Deputy Director McMahon told the Senate Intelligence Committee on June 21 that where there has been an investigation of any impropriety and "it is found that these allegations are not frivolous," the records would be released. That means the C.I.A. would decide which charges against it are frivolous and which are not. The agency would then release only those files that prove the damaging allegations against it—a public-spirited act that those who have attempted to gain access to C.I.A. documents find highly unlikely.

The Mazzoli bill, like the Senate bill, contains a requirement that the C.I.A. search and review intelligence reports derived from operational files. But the language is vague on the question of whether the C.I.A. would be required to *release* those reports. If it would not be, the agency would have what amounts to a total exemption from the F.O.I.A. David Sobel, an attorney who is suing the C.I.A. for its records on the United States Student Association, points out that the agency might withhold such intelligence reports by claiming they reveal what is in the operational files from which they were derived. The F.B.I. exempts its intelligence reports, Sobel says, by claiming that to release them would show how and from whom the information in them was obtained.

Both the Senate and House bills exempt from search and review "operational files located in the Directorate of Operations, Directorate of Science and Technology and Office of Security." The Directorate of Operations oversaw Operation Chaos. The Office of Security was involved in Operation Chaos. It also infiltrated the underground press.

The bills would still require the C.I.A. to search records in response to requests from individuals for their own files. But the language in both bills is vague on whether such files would have to be *released*.

Does the exemption of operational files pose the threat of C.I.A. cover-ups? An agency spokesman said, "By removing these sensitive operational files from the F.O.I.A. process, the public is deprived of no meaningful information whatsoever." Lynch agrees. He told the Senate Intelligence Committee on June 28 that those files "are now invariably exempt from disclosure," so, presumably, nothing would be lost.

Actually, both gentlemen are wrong. Operational files *have* been released by the C.I.A. Indeed, they have been used to document news stories that embarrassed the agency. For example, Chip Berlet, who operated the Denver-based College Press Service, which provides antiwar news to more

than 500 college newspapers, requested his personal file. On October 25, 1976, the C.I.A. released an informant's report about him. The report, dated April 29, 1971, said that the news service was moving from its Washington, D.C., headquarters to Denver. The informant, Salvatore John Ferrera, wrote that Berlet "is an enthusiastic person but was close-mouthed about his background." I drew on that report, along with other documents obtained under the F.O.I.A., in writing an article entitled "Sabotaging the Dissident Press," which appeared in the *Columbia Journalism Review* in 1981.

In February of this year, the College Press Service received copies of four documents in the files of the Directorate of Operations and two in those of the Office of Security. The documents came from files that the C.I.A. and the A.C.L.U. say are never disclosed.

Still another example: On July 16, *The Washington Post* published my story about C.I.A. operations that targeted the United States Student Association, which represents 3 million college students. *The Post's* story was based on documents obtained under the F.O.I.A.—indexing files of the Directorate of Operations. Under S. 1324, such indexes would not be released.

Perhaps the most serious flaw in these bills is the provision that would prevent legal challenges to the C.I.A.'s withholding of documents. Suits challenging the withholding of operational files would be thrown out of court.

Mayerfeld told the Senate Intelligence Committee on June 21 that of seventy-seven suits pending against the agency under the F.O.I.A., forty-six would be affected by the proposed legislation: twenty-two would be dismissed outright because they involve requests for operational files, and a majority of the requested files would be exempt in the remaining twenty-four cases.

A few days later, Mayerfeld changed his figures. He submitted amended testimony saying that of sixty-nine suits pending against the agency, "it is believed that 39 litigations would be unaffected. . . . I cannot with certainty state how many, or if indeed any, of [the other] 30 would be dismissed."

Why the change in testimony? A committee staff member who interviewed Mayerfeld explained that "he was guessing" the first time around.

As for the A.C.L.U.'s position on this critical provision, Adler said, "We haven't addressed that issue at this point."

An example of a lawsuit that might be dismissed if the Senate bill is passed is one I filed. In 1979, when I was working on the *Columbia Journalism Review* article, I requested the agency's extensive files on the underground press. The C.I.A. replied that the cost of searching its files would be \$61,501. In June 1982, after it persisted in refusing to release even one page, I filed suit.

Last September, the C.I.A. agreed to release some of the files. Some are located in the Directorate of Operations, and those would be exempt from release under the Senate bill. My lawsuit could result in more files being released, but under the proposed legislation it could be dismissed.

Why didn't the A.C.L.U. oppose this legislation from the start? The group offers many explanations, but the plain fact is that it reached an informal agreement with the C.I.A. not to oppose it. A source who works closely with Lynch confirmed that "the deal is on." The C.I.A. has said that the deal is on.

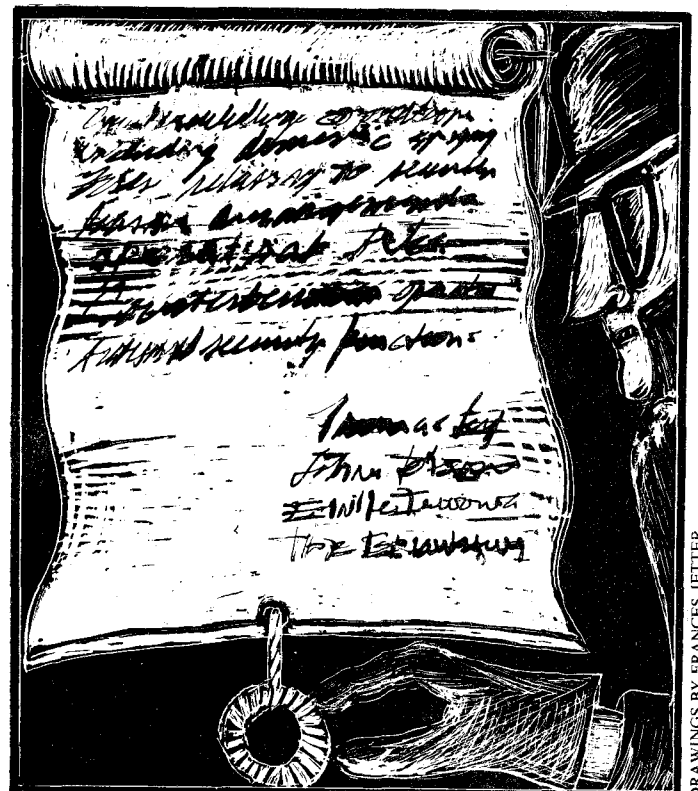
Or, as Mayerfeld told me, "There was kind of an understanding that we should wind up somewhere between total relief and the status quo. There was a mutual realization that some improvements could be achieved, and this bill was it."

Mayerfeld said that the C.I.A. discussed the bill with Lynch. When asked when the agency and the A.C.L.U. reached an understanding, Mayerfeld said, "Before the bill was introduced."

What would have happened if the A.C.L.U. had refused the deal? Morton Halperin, who heads the Center for National Security Studies, and who works closely with Lynch, said, "The C.I.A. would not have given up their public and vigorous effort to secure a total exemption unless we were willing to state that this new approach was one we could consider." In other words, but for the A.C.L.U. deal, the C.I.A. might have obtained a total exemption from the F.O.I.A., instead of the limited exemption the bill gives it.

The agency, however, takes a different view of the matter. C.I.A. General Counsel Stanley Sporkin told me, "We would have liked a full exemption but we realized that wasn't in the cards."

Tonda Rush, who directs the Freedom of Information Service Center in Washington, D.C., said, "There wasn't anybody in the Senate who would sponsor the total exemption." Another F.O.I.A. expert said, "Basically, you've got



DRAWINGS BY FRANCES JETTER

the C.I.A. and the A.C.L.U. If they're in agreement, who is going to pick a fight?"

And if the A.C.L.U. fights the legislation? Lynch said, "If the A.C.L.U. opposes this bill, it won't go through Congress." Congressional sources I talked with agree.

Steven Dornfeld, president of the Society of Professional Journalists, said, "It would be difficult to persuade the A.C.L.U. to oppose the bill. From my vantage point, it appeared that staff members of that group had much to do with giving birth to the measure."

The A.C.L.U. seems to have forgotten the Congressional testimony of its legislative director, John H.F. Shattuck, against exempting the C.I.A. from the act. In July 1981, he told the House Subcommittee on Government Information, "CIA Director William Casey . . . is determined to pursue a broader FOIA exemption for the CIA. What is the public to make of this when confronted with reports of a proposed Reagan Executive Order authorizing the CIA to carry out broad domestic security functions inside the United States? Why should Congress accept this 'trust us' approach to CIA accountability?"

Yet the A.C.L.U. appears to have swallowed the C.I.A.'s "trust us" argument.

The A.C.L.U. should continue its fight for less secrecy in government. It should tell Congress the deal is off, and it should use its influence to kill the legislation. A.C.L.U. members should urge the organization to support openness in government and to oppose granting the C.I.A. any more exemptions from the Freedom of Information Act. □

■ REPLY

There Is No Deal

MORTON H. HALPERIN AND
ALLAN ADLER

Angus Mackenzie seems determined to prove that the A.C.L.U. has joined the C.I.A. in a sinister "deal" to sell out the Freedom of Information Act. In his zeal to portray the A.C.L.U. with unclean hands, he has distorted or ignored its explanation of its position on S. 1324 in public testimony and in conversations between himself and A.C.L.U. lawyers.

The A.C.L.U. has made no "deal" and does not support the version of S. 1324 that is now before the Senate Intelligence Committee. That was stated explicitly by Mark Lynch in his testimony on behalf of the A.C.L.U. at the committee's hearing on June 28. The last paragraph of that testimony describes the A.C.L.U. position concisely:

In summary, if this bill will not result in the loss of information now available under the FOIA, if it will result in improved

processing of requests, and if the other problems I have identified, as well as any other legitimate problems which may be identified by others, are resolved, the ACLU will support this bill.

Contrary to Mackenzie's statements, the A.C.L.U. is taking that position not because of some prior commitment but because it believes it to be substantively correct and in the best interests of those who favor open government. The A.C.L.U. is not, as Mackenzie disparagingly asserts, "nit-picking" over the language of S. 1324. If the bill is amended to eliminate the problems the A.C.L.U., various press and historians' groups and others have identified, the A.C.L.U. believes it will improve C.I.A. compliance with the F.O.I.A. If the necessary changes are not made, the A.C.L.U. will oppose the bill.

In the meantime, those of us involved in this legislation would welcome the opportunity to talk to those "critics" and "information experts" who, if Mackenzie states their view correctly, think the A.C.L.U. is being taken for a ride. Except for David Sobel, they have not brought their opinions directly to our attention.

Sobel's concern, insofar as it has not been overstated by Mackenzie, is a valid one. His solution—maintaining full search requirements when a domestic organization requests information about itself—is one of several changes proposed to the Intelligence Committee by people outside the A.C.L.U. that we support. The A.C.L.U. has never claimed a monopoly on wisdom in these areas, and it has publicly stated its intention to support any proposals it thinks will improve the bill.

As for Mackenzie's critique of the bill, there is little that requires a response. Much of his criticism is based on materials the A.C.L.U. provided him upon request, and reflects the positions the A.C.L.U., press groups and historians took in the Senate hearings. We all agree that the bill must be amended to insure that no useful information that was released in the past would be exempt from search and review. Similarly, we all agree that Congress must insure that the C.I.A. will live up to its promise to process F.O.I.A. requests more expeditiously.

On one point, however, Mackenzie simply misunderstands the bill. It does not create a new exemption for any information. Any intelligence information that is exempt from release now because it identifies sources or methods would continue to be exempt, but the bill would not provide a rationale or authority for withholding additional information.

When the Senate Intelligence Committee completes its review of the bill and is ready to vote on a revised version, the A.C.L.U., press groups and others will have to decide whether it is acceptable. There will be then, as there is now, room for genuine debate and disagreement over the likely consequences of enactment and the appropriate legislative strategy to follow. However, that debate—and the subsequent efforts of all who participate in it—will not be enhanced by a search for secret and impure motives on the part of those who have been in the front lines of the battle to preserve and to implement the F.O.I.A. □

Morton H. Halperin is director of the Center for National Security Studies. Allan Adler is legislative counsel for the Center for National Security Studies.

■ WHILE SOMEONE ELSE IS EATING—IV

Foreclosed Dream In Detroit

This is the fourth in a series of articles that will appear in The Nation about how some people are being made to live in America today. The writers of the articles are all novelists or poets. They were not given "assignments"; they were asked to write about the human costs of President Reagan's policies, and they chose their subjects under that rubric. The idea was to free them from all the constraints of journalism save one: that of grounding their work in reality. Our aim was to gather an uneven collection, each piece as unique as the voice and the sensibility of the artist who wrote it.

This article has been edited for length, but will be published in its entirety by Doubleday/Anchor Press in the collection entitled While Someone Else Is Eating.

EARL SHORRIS

On July 13, 1980, the Republican National Convention opened in Detroit. The Reagan campaign had chosen the most symbolic structure in the city for its headquarters: the new Detroit Plaza Hotel, the towering centerpiece of the downtown redevelopment effort that had been named the Renaissance Center. Since then, the hotel complex has failed; the owners could not pay the mortgage; the Aetna Life Insurance Company foreclosed on the center.

A mile and a half west and five miles north of the Renaissance Center, another mortgage company has foreclosed on another structure. In two days the small brick and shingle house of one gable will be sold at auction. Something has been taken from this house and from the family inside it. The taking of this thing is a kind of murder, as if the breath or blood was being drained slowly, over the years, over the generations. But one must do more than merely look and listen to detect the murder. The signs are clear, but one must scrutinize the situation, concentrating on Barbara Piney's house.

Concentration will be difficult, for poverty is not interesting, either to the poor or to the rich. It is the curse of the decent poor to be so utterly uninteresting that immoral people can hide them and moral people cannot find them.

Barbara Piney was still a girl when her parents separated. Her mother had a rheumatic heart. She couldn't work. There was no money. Barbara describes herself ruefully as the second generation on Aid to Families with Dependent Children. "I spent a lot of time taking care of my mother," she said. "That's part of the reason why I dropped out of school. My mother was afraid to be alone. She couldn't

walk across the room because of that rheumatic heart. She passed away at 37. A.F.D.C. is good, if you can't do better. But I would like to see my daughter be an achiever. Aid is not something I wanted to do for myself, but my situation hasn't let me get out of it. I've tried with little jobs here and there, but none of the jobs I've had paid hospitalization or whatever. I couldn't do it. The system is set up to keep you behind, to keep you on Aid. All the mothers I know on A.F.D.C. are striving to get off. People want to be independent."

There is time on A.F.D.C., more as the last child goes to school, time for remembrance and regret. When it is not hard time, it is heavy time. The sense of failure and dependence has been transmogrified by the Reagan Administration. "I feel like a diseased person," Barbara said, "like an insect. There are a lot of people that misuse the system, even the rich, but when we're attacked it stereotypes the average poor person. It hurts a lot because it's not true. We don't like being where we are."

In the heavy time—at night or in the winter when the children are all in school and the house is quiet and there is nowhere to go and nothing to do—she has begun to think: "I could have done so much better, if I had known, if I had the right type of guidance. I wouldn't have dropped out of school. I probably wouldn't have had my first child. Those two factors alone would have made a big difference.

"A person's environment makes a world of difference. It does a lot for their self-esteem. Even as a kid, I had a low esteem. I had many complexes. There were so many things I felt I didn't like about myself. There were so many things I had to do to make people like me. I had a complex about my nose and I had a burn on my arm and I didn't like my legs. They called me Hook; you know how cruel children can be. There were so many things I didn't like: my hair was always nappy, my clothes were always raggedy. I didn't get real good care.

"I didn't realize how much I didn't like myself until about three years ago, when I had my revelation about how my life worked out this way. At about 30 or 31 it happens to everyone. I started asking myself what caused me not to be successful. I started writing down what I did. For example, when I did get a job, I would go home after work. I didn't socialize. I didn't go to the parties. They would do things I didn't do, smoke weed and all. The girls I worked with were the same; we didn't mingle. I wasn't an outgoing type of a person. I always found myself misunderstood. I might even have scared off men because I was so nice. A lady looks for security where a man looks for pleasure."

Barbara lives in the basement of the house, in the room without a door, in the room with the gas furnace and the old, dead refrigerator and the battered washing machine. She lives beneath the exposed heating ducts and electrical wires. Her bed is a mattress; the headboard is the concrete block wall of the basement. She has hung what might once have been bedspreads on some portions of the walls. At night, lying in her bed, she looks at an old institutional-green freezer that sits precariously on the uneven basement floor. She hears the rumble of the compressor. At night, when she

Earl Shorris is general editor of this series. Eric Etheridge and Sylvia Sasson are associate editors.

seeks to dream in the hours before sleep, she looks up at the naked underside of a floor. It is a room without a closet or a window, the room with no door. The dressing table is the chipped mustard-yellow top of a washing machine. The washstand is a gray laundry sink. The toilet is two floors up.

The odor of the odor insinuated into natural gas so that it will not go unnoticed is a winter guest in the room where Barbara lives, and in all the other rooms of her house. The odor has been there so long that no one notices it.

"I turned my bedroom into a TV room for the children," Barbara said. In that dark room, a couch and a chair slump on the bare floor. The shapes of the couch and the chair are vague, hidden by dark-colored blankets or pieces of yard goods that have been draped over the old rounds of arms and backs. Something is wrong with the tilt of the furniture; it is leaning under its camouflage, telling of escaped cotton, springs untied, wood cracked, unglued.

One suspects a different cause for the TV room. Perhaps the furniture was once in the living room, which is now empty but for a low rectangular chest. Perhaps the furniture doesn't live there anymore because it was too old, too poor, because Barbara couldn't bear its legs or its raggedy clothes. The drain of the world of making do means living with less and less, with the discovery that ingenuity wanes and that one chair cannot occupy two spaces.

A long time ago—she cannot remember when—her dreams were affected: she lies in bed at night thinking of the future, but it is always *the future*, and it is called *school* or *independence* or a *better world*. The future has no content, she cannot touch the future, she has never seen it. The future is a change of luck, the big break, esteem. "I don't really see things in my dreams," she said. "I guess my dreams are abstract." She nods once, wearily, as if to say that in such dreams there is no place to rest her head.

"All I have is time."

There is no dust in the house, there is not a mark on the walls, the children's rooms are perfectly neat, in perfect order. The red plastic milk crates that serve as chests and cupboards and occasional tables throughout the house are neatly stacked. One can see into them, into the tidiness, into the emptiness of almost all the chests and cupboards made of red plastic milk crates.

The floors are warm, except for the concrete floor in Barbara's room. She walks barefoot through her house, a woman not five feet tall, with straightened hair, skin the color of tobacco stain, Semitic features: a desert nose, a mouth that becomes a crescent when she smiles, heavy eyelids over enormous eyes. She wears jeans and a dark brown cardigan sweater, her winter outfit along with the tennis shoes she keeps near the back door.

It was not so long ago—1967—that Barbara was filled with dreams and singing. She keeps the remains of that time in one of the red plastic milk crates. There are a few folded, crumbling pieces of paper, three photographs, two postcards, a 45 rpm record. The group was called The Devotions; Barbara Piney sang lead. It was Motown time. The hits were coming out of the Detroit recording studios like

Cadillacs rolling off the line. Detroit was booming, money seemed to be there for the taking; expectations ran so high a riot was brewing. The record by The Devotions made some of the charts. "Same Old Sweet Lovin'" was the play side, backed by "Devil's Gotten Into My Baby."

In the grand tradition the group went on tour: three girls recently dropped out of high school, one of them pregnant, a manager/agent/A&R man and a couple of musicians vacuum-packed into a worn-out station wagon. They went south toward home, to towns like the towns where the family farms had been, to play to crowds where the people looked and talked down-home. They had been awaited and applauded. After three months everything stopped. There was no money from the record, there was nothing left from the tour. One of the girls joined another group. Barbara's first child was born.

After the child, after the disintegration of the group, she moved in with her aunt, who cared for her child, then for her children, while Barbara worked. She got a General Education Diploma, took a course at a community college. In 1974 she was working as a spot-welder at a Chrysler plant in Detroit. The money was good, the work was steady. The oil shortages had shaken the auto companies, but everyone was certain that the bedrock of American industry was solid—Chrysler was not General Motors but it was still one of the biggest manufacturing organizations in America. Barbara homesteaded the little house two blocks from the freeway on the West Side.

When she moved in, the paint was new, the carpeting was new, everything was clean and in perfect repair. Even the wiring and plumbing were new. She paid \$15,500 for the house, \$165 a month to the mortgage company to start, with the payments to rise slowly over thirty years. It cost her \$400 to move in. She bought some furniture, draperies that could be hemmed to fit the windows, appliances, a television. It was a complete household. She was elated. That was in January 1975. She had been at Chrysler for almost a year. Soon afterward she was laid off for the first time. It was a week off and a week on, two weeks off and a week on. She had to pay a babysitter, she couldn't be sure when she would work, what she would earn. Finally, she had to leave the job and seek Aid. It was the end of what she calls independence. She had fallen into the pattern, she was the second generation on A.F.D.C.

"People talk about a Depression," she said, "but I feel like I've always been in a depression. I've had to sacrifice. It's hard now, but it's always been hard. I'm used to having to struggle; it's not a big thing for me. But as long as I've been on A.F.D.C. I've been in a depression."

The payments for the house have risen to \$198 a month. Her utility bills have gone up. Her food stamps have been cut. Bus transportation for her daughter is no longer free. She feels the squeeze.

She's describing her life at the end of a binge, a spending spree unlike anything else she can remember in the nine years she has been on A.F.D.C. It began when the sewer backed up in her house: "I went to the worker and said that I needed plumbing, electrical work and plastering done.

They gave me a book of contractors to call. But those people won't come out because they know A.F.D.C. will only take the lowest bid. Well, then my sewer backed up so I had to get the work done. But the Aid wouldn't pay because I didn't get the three estimates while the sewer was backing up into the house. So I fell behind when I paid \$180 to the plumber. That was in September.

"Then I couldn't make the October payment. When I could pay October, it was November, and they wanted two months or nothing. They sent me warning letters and all, but they wouldn't accept my payment. And once I got behind on my house note, A.F.D.C. wouldn't pick up the electric or water bills. So I got a shut-off notice and I had to pay them. Then I got further behind. When I got the foreclosure notice I didn't cry. Crying doesn't help my situation any. But I never stop thinking about it. As far as tears, I'm cried out. But I think about it. I think about it every hour.

"I love this house."

Nothing political happens in Barbara Piney's life. She liked John F. Kennedy, she likes everything she has heard about Franklin Delano Roosevelt. She sort of liked Jimmy Carter. "Ronald Reagan's major aim isn't geared for poor people," she said. She thinks he's a racist; she's sure of that. The only thing remotely political she ever did was to attend a meeting of the Black Madonna Lodge of the Shriners. "I'm not a political person," she said. "I would love to be, but I've never had the time. It's not convenient. In a way I believe a little toward the socialist way. I might be a communist. It would be a much better world, a more peaceful world. It would be more equal, there would be less crime. No one would be poor or in need of Aid. Everyone would have a job. The rich wouldn't have it all like they do now."

With difficulty she recalls where she heard of this "ism" that holds so much promise for peace and equality. It was in a political science course during her weeks at Wayne County Community College.

In the middle of Sunday morning, Barbara Piney stands barefoot in the kitchen, stirring chicken dressing in a pot, while the chicken bakes and the potato salad chills. The children wake up late. They stay upstairs until Sunday dinner is ready. A meal is skipped, the budget is stretched. Barbara has learned to survive on \$400 a month, all that is left in food stamps and Aid after paying on her mortgage and for utilities. It would amount to a little more than a dollar per meal per person, if no one in the family ever needed clothing or soap or toothpaste or bus fare, if the gas bill and the phone bill didn't have to be paid, if the ceiling didn't need painting and it didn't cost \$25 to get someone to cut down the dead tree in the backyard. Even though the family uses toilet paper instead of Kleenex and paper towels instead of paper napkins, it still costs money to buy toilet paper and paper towels. It takes a lot of soap to make a house so tidy and clothes so clean.

Barbara doesn't have a dollar a meal for each person in the family; she has the 43 cents per meal now considered adequate in the food stamp program.

In the backyard, strips of ground have been cleared for a

garden. Barbara plants vegetables there: string beans, wax beans, peppers, squash, tomatoes, beets, collards, mustard, turnips, strawberries and onions. She had the tree chopped down so there would be more sun for the vegetables. When the harvest is good, she freezes the surplus of summer for use in winter.

In two days the tidiest house in West Detroit will be sold at auction, unless Barbara's caseworker wants to stop it or the Legal Services office can make an arrangement with the courts permitting her to keep the house if she increases her payments, perhaps by \$40 a month. She can only imagine what will happen when she has \$40 less each month.

What she cannot do with the house is fill it with herself and her three children. Nor can she mark the house with things that are the signs of who they are. The one sign that is uniquely hers was written in a small patch of concrete at the base of the front steps: God Bless You. She calls it her mark. It is her only mark. The tidy house is empty of the made or purchased choices of life. What little adorns it has been cast off by acquaintances and strangers, then accepted, found, accommodated, like the weather or the hour, no more made, no more owned. As the house is empty so is the street empty. Loneliness has drained all odors but the odor of gas, all flavor, all light from the house, from the street, the neighborhood, the Near West Side.

Poverty has disconnected the family from itself and the world around it. The murder is revealed as the draining of culture by means of generations of confinement inside a diminishing space. That is the horror. These are people formed by television and now too bored by television to watch it. No newspapers, no magazines come into this house. The only books were gifts of the Unity Light of Truth Church of Unity Village, Missouri. The music is man-



ufactured; it relates to the human experience in the manner of detergents, cheese spreads and false fingernails. Life in the house is confounded by space: the distance between the Piney family and the rest of the world cannot be traversed; poverty is a moat around them, but inside the moat the family is packed so tightly it cannot breathe.

In the flat accents of the Midwest one can hear the dying of the language that was their birthright. They are without the things of which metaphors are made. There are no woods or creeks in West Detroit; there is no local history. The Pineys are made to speak the words of the blue light of television and supermarket aisles, the words that are not words, the intolerable inflation of language that displaces the real things on which imagination must be founded.

Barbara will continue to look for the promise of history in some "ism" she cannot quite recall. She will ponder metaphysics as explained by the books from Unity Village, Missouri. In a world without concrete dreams, any abstraction will do. □

On Peace, Power

(Continued From Front Cover)

problems of people within a deformed, war-oriented society; and it addresses the politics of building the alliances and coalitions that make up the disarmament movement from groups like those that poured into the center of Washington, D.C., on August 27.

Most of the analysts who contributed to this collection add to our understanding of the dynamics of coalition-building. And the emphasis upon the urgent need to enlarge the goal of the disarmament movement to take in opposition to U.S. military interventions (whether nuclear or not)—that is, to transform the disarmament movement into a peace movement—is welcome, and is forcefully presented by Noam Chomsky.

Yet at times *Beyond Survival* appears introversive to an outsider like myself: the movement is placed on a couch and undergoes analysis. Somewhere between both ends of the argument there is a piece of the whole that is missing: the objective analysis of power—its strategies, structures and controls, and the strategies (national or international) for contesting that power. The politics of most of the essays is derived from subjective inferences. The authors explore the self-images and grievances of disadvantaged constituencies,

*The Aftermath: The Human and Ecological Consequences of Nuclear War. Edited by Jeannie Peterson for Ambio. Pantheon. 196 pp. \$7.95.

Beyond Survival: New Directions for the Disarmament Movement. Edited by Michael Albert and David Dellinger. South End Press. 196 pp. \$8.

E.P. Thompson, a social historian and writer, is on the coordinating committee of European Nuclear Disarmament. He is the author of Making of the English Working Class (Pantheon), William Morris (Pantheon) and The Poverty of Theory (Monthly Review Press), and is an editor of Protest and Survive (Monthly Review Press).

and conclude that all of them would be less powerless if they could only meld their protests into a common movement—an ever bigger June 12 movement going in more revolutionary directions. "Will we cling to divisive prejudices," asks Dellinger, "and deny connections between the approaching War to End War and the abuse of millions because of their race, sex, sexual preference, or age in a society dominated by the blindnesses of class arrogance?" The movement itself becomes its own goal, a kind of therapy: "Take up thy couch and walk!"

Race, gender, sexual preference, age and class are all thrown together as if they were all occasioned by the same forces of oppression (by capitalism? patriarchy? imperialism?) and all to be resolved by the same forms of resistance. It would take me too long to sort that set out. Yet some of the grievances indicated (offense to the aged) are beyond mortal repair but might be softened by a reform of manners and sensibility; others might be mended by reforms of law and institutions; and yet others (class) may require a more revolutionary remedy.

Mass movements may be therapeutic (they often are), but that cannot determine their strategies and goals. The peace movement is engaged in a long, rolling contest with the strongest establishments of armed power in the history of the world—and the strongest of all in this nation—and it cannot afford to lose the contest. It might even be thought to be patronizing to tell blacks (or women or Hispanics or gays) that they should support the disarmament movement because they are oppressed and disadvantaged and therefore it is in their self-interest to do so, etc., etc. Those constituencies are made up of citizens who are open to the same rational arguments and appeals to solidarity as any other, as was demonstrated in Washington on August 27. When one of the contributors to *Beyond Survival*, Jack O'Dell (a former associate of Martin Luther King Jr.), sets arguments of immediate self-interest aside and utters an unqualified condemnation of the arms trade and of U.S. support for South Africa's apartheid regime, he writes in an older vocabulary of politics that will be readily understood.

What the peace movement needs is a more objective mode of political analysis than is now current, and a plainer vocabulary of international bonding and solidarity. The politics of ego-fulfillment has had a long run, and it has made some real gains—and power has looked down on it all with benign self-assurance. Indeed, power has opened its portals a crack and has allowed the winners to come in. Among the small advance party of U.S. officers trained to launch cruise missiles who arrived several weeks ago at Greenham Common in my own country there was one woman, it was announced (with self-congratulation). I confess that I read of this example of affirmative action with confusion and shock. What kind of "individual rights" ideology is it that affirms the right of every person to exploit or to exterminate his or her fellows?

It is a marginal point, and most of all in Margaret Thatcher's England. The larger point is that if the survival of civilization is truly threatened (and I suppose that it is), then

the politics of self-expression and self-fulfillment of particular interests must be placed under some political self-control; they cannot be pressed always to the point of dissension and inner division. (In *Beyond Survival*, Michael Albert illustrates how some of those divisions were fomented in the Radical Sixties; in the Somber Eighties they can no longer be afforded.) And the political self-control must arise not from subjective inferences but from a shared perception of the objective crisis that threatens all interests alike, and hence from shared strategies and shared goals.

Since the crisis is now global, the shared perception and the strategies of resistance must increasingly become international. This is where the American peace movement (whose work is crucial to civilization's survival) faces quite exceptional difficulties. *Inside* the United States, many people feel themselves to be most bruised and restricted by the structures of racism, sexism and so on; and of course they must and will contest those oppressions. But *outside* the United States, in Central America and increasingly in Western Europe, it appears that it is arrogant American hegemonic nationalism that is most threatening (and that may even descend in the shape of a black F-111 pilot or a female cruise missile launch-officer). American military personnel are now, after all, *everywhere*: in El Salvador, in the Sudan, in Lebanon, in England and West Germany, in Turkey and Greece, in Diego Garcia and South Korea and Honduras and around the Persian Gulf. What are they doing there? And by what right? It is enough to make us un-Americans pray for a reversion to good old-fashioned Middle American isolationism. There is nothing wrong with authentic American nationalism if it is concerned with America's own cultural and historical traditions. But will it please go home and stay indoors.

I have written "hegemonic nationalism" and not "imperialism." Of course U.S. imperial interests and strategies palpably exist (albeit with some inner contradictions), and several of the contributors to *Beyond Survival* make shrewd cuts at them. Yet the naming of power in the United States as simply "imperialism" may be too tidy. For it suggests that the problem can be easily isolated as a powerful group of interests somewhere over there—the Pentagon, the multinational corporations—whereas what must be confronted is a hegemonic "official" national ideology, which permeates not only the state and its organs but also many "liberal" critics of the state (in the Democratic Party), which saturates the media and which even confuses opposition groups within the society.

People in the vast regions of Middle America know almost nothing of the world across the waters (where their fellow citizens are being rapidly deployed) except the fragmentary ideological fictions offered in their local media. The depth of penetration of this expansionist ideology can be sensed only in episodes such as the eruption of neighborhood rowdiness against the "un-American" encampment at Seneca Falls, New York. Yet it is this ideologically confected national self-image—the herded self-identification with the goals (any goals) of the nation-state, the media-induced hysteria during the Iranian hostage crisis and the Falklands

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war, the manipulation of the minds of vast publics as to the benign motives of their rulers in invading Afghanistan or Lebanon or in intruding into Central America in support of "national interests"—that constitutes, quite as much as weaponry, the threat to survival.

The most dangerous and expansionist nationalist ideologies are those that disguise themselves as missions on behalf of human universals. Such ideologies build upon the generous, as well as the self-interested, impulses of the evangelizing nation. (Middle America believes that U.S. militarism is the export of "freedom.") That was true of the French in Napoleonic times and of the British at the zenith of empire (the "civilizing mission," the "white man's burden"). Those ideologies have now shrunk back (almost) within their historical and cultural frontiers, and are (almost) content to be simple nationalisms once more, celebrating unique historical experiences and cultural identities.

Today it is the nationalist ideologies of the Soviet Union (the heartland of universal socialism) and the United States that are expansionist, and that walk the world in the disguise of universals. And of the two, it is the American that is the most confusing. Because the U.S. population is made up of many heterogeneous in-migrations, it is possible to fall into the illusion that America is a reservoir of every human universal rather than a peculiar, local, time-bound civilization, marked by unusual social mobility, competitiveness and individualism, and with its own particular problems, needs and expectations.

Because of the youth and rapid growth of America, nationalist ideology is more artificially confected there than in any other nation. It did not grow from experiential and cultural roots, fertilized and watered by a watchful imperial ruling class, as in Britain. It was, like other artifacts of the New World, a conscious ideological construction, in the work of which ruling powers in the state, the media and the educational system all combined. The ideology consists not in the assertion of the superior virtues of the (German/British/Japanese) race but in the pretense that America is not a race or nation at all but the universal Future. It lays arrogant claim to the universalism of virtues—an incantation of freedoms and rights—and asserts in that name a prerogative to blast in at every door and to base itself in any part of the globe.

Characteristically, in the rhetoric that still engulfs the nation, "human rights" require no more definition than that they are goods that Americans enjoy (to a superlative degree) and that other guys don't. This truth is held to be self-evident. It is a cause of immense self-congratulation—and a means of internal bonding, ideological and social control, vote-soliciting and even of acquiring an attributed identity. If an Other is required as a foil to all this glittering virtue, then it is provided by communism. But anti-communism is necessary, less because communism exists than because there is a need within the ideology to define the approved national self-image against the boundary of an antagonist.

I rehearse all this (which the contributors to *Beyond Survival* and readers of *The Nation* already know) because I

wish to define the size of the problem facing the peace forces in the United States. I do so with respect; our forces in Britain were in no way strong enough to throw back a similar gust of ideology (more local but also more intense) during the Falklands war. We know the consequences. President Carter's helicopter operation to rescue the hostages in Iran was a fiasco, and he was turned out of power. Margaret Thatcher's helicopter (and task force) operation to rescue her hostages in the Falklands was a triumphant success, and she was returned to power in triumph.

The American peace movement—if it is to have any hope of success—must challenge not only the military-industrial complex (or imperialist interests) but also the hegemonic ruling ideology of the nation. It must strive to deconstruct this ideologically confected national self-image, which gives a very dangerous popular license to expansion and aggression, and to disclose in its place an authentic self-identity. I will wisely leave it to Americans—to poets and to historians—to say what that self-respecting self-image should be.

When I said that we un-Americans pray for a reversion to isolationism I was of course jesting. What we pray for, and what we now recognize with delight, is the rebirth of American internationalism—but an authentic internationalism, which conducts its relations with equals, and which conducts them with like-minded popular movements and not with client states or with servile, parasitic elites.

It is only the positive of internationalism that will be strong enough to contest and drive out the reigning national (or supranational) ideology. There is a concern and a generosity in American radical, labor, religious and intellectual traditions within which internationalism has long been nourished, although sometimes as a threatened minority view. The greatest achievement of the American disarmament movement in the past two years has not been winning this vote or that but raising peace consciousness throughout the country, questioning the self-congratulatory official image of America and providing a nationwide network of groups within which the level of international discourse and information is continually rising.

Yet it must rise a little further still. The foundation stone of internationalism cannot be guilt; it must be solidarity. We need a new Wobbly vocabulary of mutual aid and plain duty to one another in the face of power. We need to hammer out together our international strategies, in which the American movement would clearly see itself and *feel* itself to be part of a whole "International" of self-liberating impulses from imperialism and war. And we need to expand the two-way flow of information.*

Beyond Survival illustrates the limitations of our present situation. The contributors gesture, good-heartedly, at internationalism, and they argue decisively against U.S. interventionism. But they contribute less to strategic thinking than do the national office of the freeze movement and the American Friends Service Committee. It is not enough to slam "U.S. imperialism" for its offenses in the Middle East and Asia, and leave the reader washed in guilt. Should the

*Commercial break: More Americans should subscribe to *END Journal* (\$12 a year from END, 227 Seven Sisters Road, London N.4, England).

American peace movement be working in earnest for a nuclear-free Pacific, alongside the vigorous peace movements in Australia, Japan and the Pacific Islands? And what of Europe? The book adds nothing to the discussion of common strategies with European movements, and shows little evidence of having consulted our literature.

That blind spot is becoming serious. Let us take the example of the battleship Iowa task force, which New York and New Jersey officials and Congressional representatives (many of them supporters of the freeze when it seemed a vote winner) have invited into New York harbor. Maybe the citizens are already stirring a little, and are realizing the incredible folly of basing a fleet of five warships armed with nuclear-tipped cruise missiles, nuclear depth charges and ASROC missiles (some nuclear-tipped) in one of the densest population centers in the world, thereby making New York City a prime counterforce target (and candidate for nuclear accidents).

What few of them have yet understood is the political strategy behind this operation. All the fuss about the "Euromissile" crisis involves 572 cruise and Pershing 2 missiles—forward-based U.S. strategic missiles to be sited on European territory. But quietly behind these are 4,000-plus sea- and air-launched cruise missiles. There are two clear political functions for the Iowa task force. The first is as an insurance policy in case the European peace movements succeed in chasing cruise and Pershing off their territory. Sea launchers for the cruises is the fallback position. If necessary more than 300 missiles could be placed on World War II-era battleships (like the Iowa), so that two ships could carry more missiles than the entire number the United States plans to deploy in Europe.

These launchers could then lurk off the coasts of Western Europe, or they could move into the Mediterranean. They would be more mobile than ground launchers for missiles, and also *less politically visible*. No one could sit down in front of them; they would draw no demonstrations. They would get NATO leaders off the political hook, which is why Chancellor Kohl would probably favor them. (Maggie

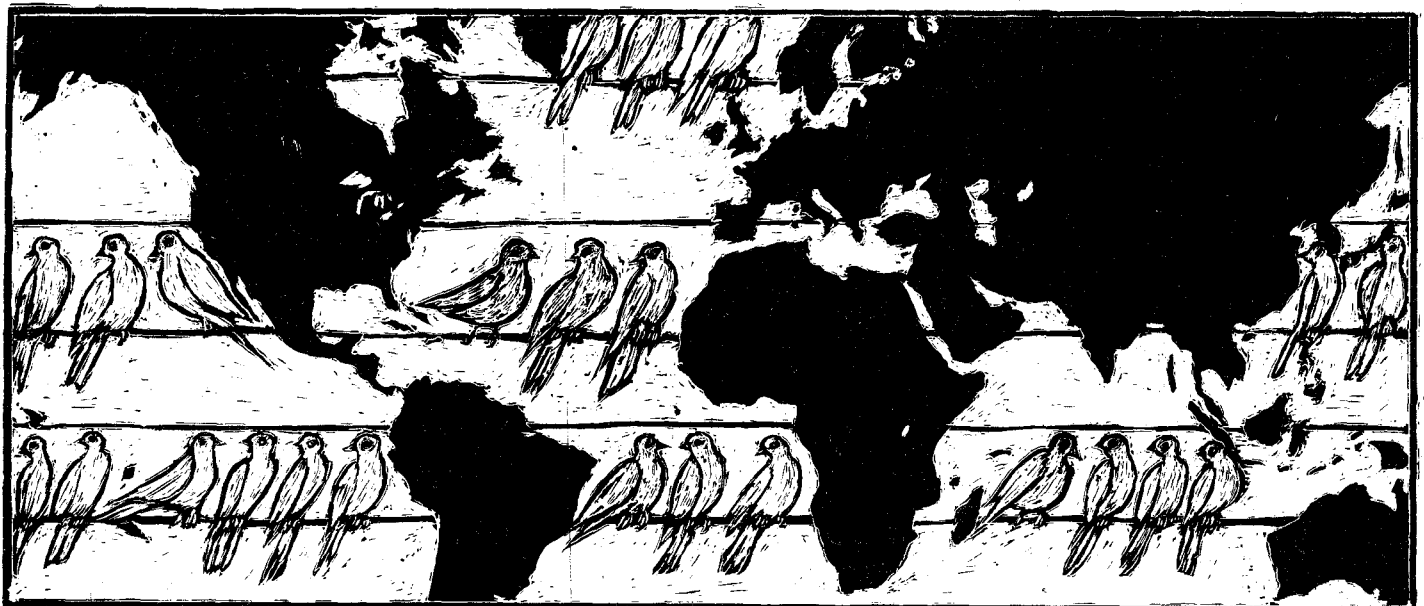
Thatcher doesn't care a damn: she is getting cages ready for us.) If the missiles are thrown out of Comiso and Greenham Common, they will reappear anchored off Staten Island.

The Iowa task force (like similar task forces armed with cruise missiles, based in California and Hawaii) will also serve as a mobile intervention fleet—that is, as a nuclear pirate fleet. The Iowa force could dodge from Iceland to the Indian Ocean; it could appear menacingly off the coast of Lebanon or Libya, supporting the Rapid Deployment Force; or it could "quarantine" some part of Africa.

Whichever way the Euromissile crisis is resolved (and just now we are not winning), the shadows will advance across the Atlantic to the American coastline. If cruise and Pershing go down in Europe, the Soviet military may well "reply" by increasing the number of its forward-based missile submarines, to bring prime American targets (of which New York City must be one) within eight to ten minutes flight time—the flight time of the European Pershing 2 to Soviet targets.

The European peace movements do not wish to export Europe's troubles to America. If things get worse for you, nothing will get better for us. We are living the same problem. We must live it together, and re-learn all that lost vocabulary of solidarity.

We shall also require solidarity in the face of power. It has been apparent, at least since January, that there is an orchestrated NATO strategy of rolling back the peace movements, on both sides of the Atlantic, by the most careful employment of public relations and media management, by the provocation of dissension and, very probably, by the infiltration of agents and provocateurs. The NATO elites feel more threatened by their domestic peace movements than they do by their purported adversary, the Warsaw bloc; they fear that a whole way of managing the world, and of controlling publics and clients, may be slipping away into some dangerous and unstable unknown. (The Warsaw bloc leaders are suffering similar anxieties.) The most important thing to them is not to be forced into defeat by their own domestic opposition. The MX is pointed not at the Soviet Union but



at the freeze; the cruise missiles at Greenham will be pointed at C.N.D.

This is to say that our peace movements are engaged in one of the sharpest confrontations of our national political lives. We must disabuse our supporters if they suppose they are confronting only "the bomb." The peace movements cannot choose whether or not to be more "political." They have challenged the bomb—and behind it they have found the full power of the state. They must go directly into that political confrontation or they must lie down and give up. If they are to reach the bomb, they must also take on a whole state-manipulated and media-endorsed ideology. And the security services.

I will give one example. On July 26, *The New York Times* carried a major report by John Vinocur, commencing on page 1 and occupying all of page 6, which purported to be about the infiltration of the Western peace movement by K.G.B. agents. Vinocur was briefed by "Western counter-intelligence officers who believe that the Soviet espionage agency's highest priorities in Western Europe include attempts to exploit the disarmament movement."

The content of this sensational story was thin, even for this thin genre. Seven columns of print offered only three pieces of evidence: (1) a stale and disputed story about a Danish journalist's contacts with a Soviet diplomat; (2) a recent diplomatic fracas in Switzerland, about which I know nothing except that what happens in that genial, neutral country is marginal to the European movement; and (3) the well-known fact that the West German Communist Party—a small party which has a tenacious familial tradition of loyalty to grandparents and great-grandparents murdered by the Nazis in Auschwitz and Belsen—plays a public, legitimate, but pro-Soviet and therefore controversial role in the German movement.

Vinocur is not a liar; he prefers to quote the lies of "informants" and to confine himself to insinuations (or smears). He allows that the peace movement is not "a creation of Soviet policy" and that most activists are not "dupes of the K.G.B." Yet the movement presents a "target of opportunity" to the K.G.B., whose task is to infiltrate "a leader or two" into each peace organization—"agents of influence . . . who can guide public positions" of the movement. Since no such leaders, or agents, are identified, we are nudged into casting a suspicious eye on them all: Petra Kelly, Msgr. Bruce Kent, Mient-Jan Faber, General Bastian, Professor Cagnes, Lord Fenner Brockway. Is one of these an "agent of influence" and another a "sleeper"?

"According to an American intelligence specialist," Vinocur continues, "the decisive point for the Soviet effort to block deployment [of Pershing and cruise missiles] will come in the fall, when West European countries expect violent confrontations with demonstrators." Note that this is now a "Soviet effort," not an effort of women at Greenham or of the Dutch Inter-Church Peace Council or the West German Greens. There follow spine-chilling predictions as to the methods K.G.B. agents would employ to provoke this violence: "They could have a demonstrator shot with a stolen U.S. Army .45 or any number of things."

On July 27, I sent a letter to *The Times*, citing my credentials and my astonishment at Vinocur's piece, regretting the failure of *The Times* to report on the nonaligned peace movements in Europe and asking this question:

How does it happen that John Vinocur, along with other U.S. correspondents, is continually being prompted by "American intelligence specialists" to warn the American public to expect "violent confrontations with demonstrators" in West Europe in the coming fall. We are warned to expect "provocations," arranged by the K.G.B. In fact the majority peace movements, like British CND and the German Greens, are engaged in many non-violent training sessions, in the effort to "self-police" their own demonstrations and to hold in check provocateurs and the angry fringe. These efforts have been marked with much success. One is forced to enquire whether it is the K.G.B. or Western "intelligence specialists" who would benefit most from violent provocations in West Europe this fall? A Bill is now going through the Bundestag which will make illegal continued attendance at any demonstration at which an act of violence has taken place. Hence a dozen "angries" hurling bricks will be able to make illegal a disciplined and peaceful demonstration numbering tens of thousands. Much the same position may arise shortly in Britain. In whose interest will it then be to excite or perhaps to pay and provoke fringe acts of violence? Is it only the K.G.B. which has "catalogues of shouters, marchers, street fighters, bomb throwers and killers," or might there not be other agencies with similar catalogues with addresses nearer to Bonn, Washington, London or New York?

This elegant (but overlong) epistle did not commend itself to the editors of *The New York Times*, and it went unpublished. However, it was not altogether unread, since I received a few days later the following courteous note:

August 2, 1983

Dear Professor Thompson:

Thank you for your letter. It reflects your deep personal involvement in the European peace movement, which Mr. Vinocur's article carefully avoided characterizing as a creature of the KGB.

Sincerely,

Craig R. Whitney
Foreign Editor

I have read this letter forward and backward, upside down and in the bath. What does it mean? It does not even say that they won't publish my letter. It tells *me* that I am deeply involved in the European peace movement (which I already knew) and appears to cite this—i.e., my expertise in these matters—as a reason for not permitting me to comment publicly on them. It affirms that Vinocur avoided characterizing the movement as a creature of the K.G.B., which is technically correct, although his article was headlined: "WEST EUROPEAN FOES OF NEW U.S. MISSILES OFTEN FIND K.G.B. MEN IN THEIR MIDST." Indeed, since I am a leading person in that movement, it might be thought that Vinocur's suggestion that the K.G.B. is working "leaders" and "agents of influence" might rub a smear or two off on my own shirt.

As a humble visitor to these hospitable shores I am over-

come with awe at receiving such kind attention from Craig Whitney's hand. But as an internationalist and a co-worker with the American peace movement, I think the actions of *The New York Times* have been foul-smelling throughout this episode, which is why I am so ill-mannered as to publish Whitney's elegaic lines upon my unpublished letter without his permission.

I wish to sound an alert through the pages of *The Nation* to my American friends and co-workers. David Dellinger, in *Beyond Survival*, has some arresting passages of reminiscence about the antiwar movement of the 1960s, which illustrate the extraordinary and disruptive activities of informants and provocateurs within the councils of the movement. Now those techniques are being exported to Europe, no doubt with the complicity (and added malice) of low-profile British and German "intelligence" operators. The advance parties have gone ahead, to penetrate the movements and to make plain the way of the missiles. It is very much in the interest of NATO "intelligence" (i.e., thugs) to provoke little episodes of violence—a bomb at a U.S. military installation, a burning car or two—culminating in some major violent affrays, and it is far more in the interest of the C.I.A. than of the K.G.B.

These acts of theater will be produced in order to inflame nationalist feelings of resentment in the American public. For the theater to be effective, the public mind must first be alerted and prepared (as Vinocur is industriously doing), and then the episodes must be given the fullest sensationalized treatment in the major media. (As it happens, the most serious episode of violence during the summer occurred at the cruise missile base in Comiso. It commenced on Hiroshima Day with some anarchist youths putting paint on a police car, and it ended in a police riot in which defenseless and nonviolent demonstrators, including many women, deputies in the Italian Parliament and clergy, were so badly beaten that several were hospitalized. There was no mention of that riot in my edition of *The New York Times*: after all, a police riot is poor copy compared with a brick thrown at the car of Vice President Bush.)

I am asking our American friends to watch with the greatest care, in the next few months, every report of "violence" in Europe, and to explain to their fellow citizens the role of provocateurs. In refusing to open its columns to any discussion of that role, *The New York Times* has made itself an active accessory in the preparations for nuclear war. It is doing an inside job for the thugs.

The sequence that is leading the world toward nuclear war is not made up only of technologies and things (missiles, task forces); it is also made up of ideological and political preparations. There is no way we can avoid the political confrontation with power (in all its forms), and we are entering a period that will be rough.

It is ideology, even more than military-industrial pressures, that is the driving motor of Cold War II. What occasions alarm is the very irrationality—the rising hysteria—of the drive, when measured against the "objective" economic or political interests of ruling groups or forces. It is as if—as at the climax of European imperialism, which led

to World War I, or as at the moment when Nazism triumphed in Germany—ideology has broken free of the existential socioeconomic matrix within which it was nurtured and is no longer subject to any controls of rational self-interest. Cold War II is a replay of Cold War I, but this time as a deadly farce: the content of real interest-conflict between the two superpowers is small, but the content of ideological rancor and "face" is dangerously high.

If history eventuated according to the rational self-interest of states or of classes, we could calm our fears of nuclear war. It is scarcely in the interest of any ruling class or state to burn up its resources, its labor force, its markets and then itself. But ideology masks all such interferences from an outer rational world. Just when the adversary postures of the two blocs are becoming increasingly pointless—and when a cease-fire in the cold war would be greatly to the advantage of both parties—ideology assumes command and drives toward its own obsessional goals.

We may call that ideology "imperialist" if we wish—and on both sides. But in naming it imperialism we should avoid reducing the problem to simplistic preconceptions (for example, Leninist) of what imperialism is. No two imperialisms have ever been the same. And none can be reduced to a monocausal analysis—for example, the pursuit of markets and profits, guided by some all-knowing committee of a ruling class. Even in Europe's imperialist zenith (which culminated in the direct occupation and exploitation of subjected territories) a wide configuration of motivations was always at play: markets, missions, military bases, naval and trade routes, competition between imperial powers, ideological zeal, the vacancy left by the dissolution of previous power structures (the Mogul empire), populist electoral hysteria, the definition of frontiers, imperial interest groups, the expectation of revenue or gold or oil (which sometimes was not fulfilled).

American and Soviet "imperialism" are also unique formations, and of the two it is Soviet that is most threatened and insecure, and American that is most expansionist. The American formation is a configuration of interests and drives: financial, commercial (or "corporatist") and extractive (the search for reserves of fossil fuels, uranium and scarce minerals); military (the alarming thrust of the arms trade, with its crazily insecure financial underwriting which, in its turn, must be underwritten by military guarantees); political (the establishment of hegemony not by direct occupation but through the proxies of parasitic ruling elites in client nations); and ideological. This formation is plainly beyond the control of any all-wise committee of a ruling class; the White House is simply rolled every which way as the eddying interests break upon its doors. Now one interest, now another, penetrates into the Oval Office.

It is clearly ideology—in the person of the President and his closest advisers—that binds this messy, indecisive configuration together and gives to it whatever erratic direction it takes. The rhetoric of the cold war legitimates the whole operation, and therefore the cold war is necessary to power's own continuance; the cold war's ideological premises must continually be recycled and its visible instruments

of terror must be "modernized." But since this process increasingly defies the self-interest of any of the participants, ideology itself becomes more hysterical. It combines into one mishmash the voices of militant Zionists, born-again fundamentalists, traumatized émigrés from Communist repression, careerist academics and bureaucrats, Western "intelligence officers" and the soothsayers of *The New York Times*.

There is now a "war movement" in Washington and in London. It is made up of particular military-industrial interest groups searching for bases, fossil fuels, new weapons, markets for arms; New Right ideologues and publicists; and populist politicians of the right, with their confrontational rhetoric and policies. The climate thus engendered is sheltering nakedly militarist adventures and interventions, legitimated by the cant of cold war apologetics.

But the military confrontation between the blocs has less and less rational strategic function; nuclear missiles are becoming symbolic counters of political "posture" or "blackmail," and negotiations are about political "face." Both SS-20s and Euromissiles are superfluous to any sane armory. And the cruise and Pershing missiles have got to come because they are symbols of America's hegemony over its clients, and their acceptance is demanded as proof of NATO's "unity." They must be put down in noxious nests in England, Germany and Sicily in order to hold the old decaying structures of life-threatening power together. The rising military appropriations are all for glue to paste over the places where the postwar political settlement (Yalta) is beginning to come apart. Nuclear weapons are not for the continuation of politics by other means; they are the *suppression* of politics, and the substitution of the symbolism of extermination.

The war movement in the West encourages—according to the basic cold war "law" of reciprocity (whether missiles or

ideology)—an ideological response in the East. In Moscow, as in Washington and London, the tattered scripts of the early 1950s are dug out of drawers and the lines are rehearsed. (Some of the old actors are still around.) *The New York Times* and *Pravda* recite the old crap: "K.G.B. agents," "agents of Western imperialism," un-American activities and peace-loving forces . . . Indeed, the malodorous agents of both sides are actually sent in. But the true adversaries that power fears, and seeks to hem in with the old ideological controls, are now not without but *within* the two superpowers' own blocs and spheres of influence. The real enemies of U.S. and NATO politicians are Central American insurgency, European "neutralism" and domestic peace and radical movements; the real enemies of the Soviet power elite are Solidarity, Afghan insurgents and the growing desire of Eastern European peoples for greater autonomy.

There are two possible ways back from the precipice to which a threatened and dying ideology is conducting us. One is simply a reassertion within the power elites of the United States and the Soviet Union of the claims of rational self-interest. What is the point of burning up the world when, with a little loss of rhetoric, it could be managed and exploited to their mutual advantage? If that way is taken, the elites will back away from war. They will come to some agreement (above the peace movements' heads), go back to arms control and SALT, and draw up a new Yalta for the entire globe, dividing it between them according to agreed rules—Afghanistan and Poland for you, El Salvador and Nicaragua for me. As for the Euromissiles, the superpowers will go for another "walk in the woods," and then inform the Europeans what they have decided as to Europe's fate.

This way is so much preferable to nuclear war that it seems churlish to call it into question. Indeed, it has some support in the United States among members of elite groups who are now getting into discourse with their Soviet analogues, and who give some backing to the freeze. Yet the trouble with this superpower settlement, this Orwellian "Yalta 1984," is that it could never be more than an interim arrangement. For the superpowers can no longer command the rest of the world—Poland and Nicaragua, Europe and Latin America—to stand still. There is indeed a question as to how much longer the elites can command their own domestic publics.

So, even if the elites of both superpowers snuggle up together and attempt to take this first way back from nuclear suicide, the world can afford only a brief interval before the second way to human survival is resumed. That is the way of the "International" of peace movements, nonaligned nations and movements for civil rights and liberation, working out—through many complexities—strategies of mutual support and solidarity. Their common aims will be the enlargement of spaces for national autonomy, the peaceful breakup or melding of the blocs and the refusal of every syllable of the vocabulary of nuclear arms. No one can draw an accurate map of this way and show where it leads. We must find out together as we go along. □

THE GROWN-UPS' CORNER

"Aggression researchers are concerned about a new, nationally marketed war game for adults called the Survival Game. The game, being promoted by National Survival Game Inc. of New Hampshire, consists of grown-ups dressing in army camouflage uniforms, then stalking through wooded terrain, trying to shoot the 'enemy' team with paint pellets shot from .68-caliber handguns. . . ."

—National Coalition on Television Violence

"You walk up to the Grand Prize—your gleaming new Ford Bronco II 4 x 4 Truck. Your NRA Field Rep. smiles and hands you the keys and your Special Edition John Wayne Colt .22 Revolver. You open the door and mount up, breathing in that great new-car smell. You turn around and admire your John Wayne Commemorative Winchester Mod. 94 Rifle on the rear window rack. You turn the ignition and the powerful V-6 engine roars to life. And then you drive off into the sunset."

—National Rifle Association, announcing the "NRA Honors John Wayne Sweepstakes"

BOOKS & THE ARTS.

What Is This Thing Called Sex?

BARBARA EHRENREICH

POWERS OF DESIRE: The Politics of Sexuality. Edited by Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell and Sharon Thompson. Monthly Review Press. 489 pp. \$25. Paper \$12.50.

Shortly after the Russian Revolution, Clara Zetkin reported to Lenin that in the discussion groups she had organized for working-class women the subject kept turning to sex. Lenin was horrified and instructed her to bring the groups around to more wholesome proletarian themes. Zetkin followed orders, no doubt leaving the anonymous female discussants to conclude that, in this revolution at least, the personal was not the political.

Ever since that episode the forces of international Marxism have owed women a little air time on the subject of sex—not just motherhood, family planning and other topics of hygienic social concern—but sex, and all the more so since Michel Foucault's recent call for a moratorium on sexual "discourse." With *Powers of Desire*, published by one of the world's most prestigious left presses, I am willing to consider the debt paid—or at least the first installment. *Powers of Desire* is like an explosion of conversation after long silence. It presents so many urgent voices (speaking in poetry, fiction, scholarly essays, personal memoirs) that it is hard to know which to attend to first.

Surprising things happen in these pages: lesbians ponder the charms as well as the drawbacks of heterosexuality; a gay male leftist gives capitalism its due for willy-nilly promoting sexual freedom; feminists confront the power of masochistic fantasies and attractions; sexual "revolutions" turn into retreats; degradations (of black slave women) become the basis of a hard-edged wisdom; and little girls (not only boys) lust with murder in their hearts. If anything is left out—and having cast their net as

wide as the "politics of sexuality," the editors are sure to be charged with some omissions—it could not have been because Snitow, Stansell and Thompson found it offensive, unthinkable or politically "incorrect." In the conversation begun by *Politics of Desire*, anything imaginable is also sayable, and that saying is invested with a wonderful libidinal energy of its own.

But the conversation is not entirely open-ended. *Politics of Desire* takes a position, or, I should say, when all the voices are weighed and factored in, it is a position. Feminists are not of one mind about sexuality—what it is, where it comes from, what it means and whether some parts of it are good and others nasty. In the last few years, ambivalence has hardened into polarization. On one side is what the editors call "cultural feminism," which emerged in the early 1970s out of the feminist confrontation with lesbianism as a "political" alternative. Impressed by the apparent egalitarianism of lesbian relationships and preoccupied with the violence too often overt or latent in heterosexuality, cultural feminists arrived at a kind of sexual separatism: male sexuality, as Alice Echols summarizes their position, was "driven, irresponsible, genitally oriented, and potentially lethal," while female sexuality was nurturant, diffuse and even spiritual. It followed that "good" sex was female (gentle, not too genital), while "bad" sex was male (spasmodic, dangerous); and good feminists would of course choose good sex. Little by little, this appraisal edged out the earlier radical feminist emphasis on sexual androgyny and became—especially with the growth of the antipornography movement—the most audible feminist "line" on sex. In a world of expanding sexual variety, feminism (or one vocal side of it) was playing a role analogous to the nineteenth-century social purity movement, as Judith Walkowitz implies in her essay, or even, as Echols less charitably suggests, to the Moral Majority.

On the other side, at first, was not much at all. What is sometimes called the "pro-sex" side coalesced slowly, more in reaction to cultural feminist orthodoxy than out of any clearly defined countervailing conviction. There were

feminists who questioned whether pornography was really an incitement to (and reflection of) male sexual violence; there were lesbians (most outrageously, sadomasochists) who resented the cultural feminists' idealization (and de-sexualization) of lesbianism; there were heterosexual feminists who were tired of having their particular sexual proclivity described as a bad habit and a concession to patriarchy. Out of all this, the editors tell us in their introduction, is emerging a "feminist politics that stresses sexual variety and pleasure," and while *Powers of Desire* must have been conceived and largely written before the polarization set in, it is the most comprehensive statement we have from this new perspective. That it comes from the left is a minor marvel, given the puritanical heritage of the socialist forefathers. But in the context of the current feminist debate, this is perhaps not surprising. Cultural feminism, as represented by the writings of Andrea Dworkin, Mary Daly and others, is deeply pessimistic about men's nature, while socialist feminists are, through faith or political conviction, optimistic about both sexes and the eventual prospect of good times for all.

So what is the new radical and feminist "line" on sex? If one recurrent theme runs through *Powers of Desire*, it is that sex is "socially constructed"—or, as we used to say, "culturally determined." The editors allow that sex is rooted in a "biological potential" but insist that it is nurture and not nature that determines how the potential will be expressed or whether it will be expressed at all. No innately "natural" desires, acts or objects of desire are presumed. This position at once sets *Powers of Desire* apart from cultural feminism, and also from a tradition of sexual radicalism—exemplified by Wilhelm Reich—that sees sex as a fixed drive or kind of energy, held in check only by unnatural constraints. Here nothing is taken for granted, not even sex. The editors tell us, "The question of whether there is a repressed entity—'sex'—that can be set free remains controversial."

The contributors—who are themselves a fairly stunning group of feminist and radical thinkers—give ample evidence to support this sexual agnosticism. Ellen Ross and Rayna Rapp lead off with a whirlwind overview of cul-

Barbara Ehrenreich's latest book is *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight From Commitment* (Anchor/Doubleday). She is a fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies.

tural and historical diversity in sexual matters (a future book of their own, I hope) to make the case that "sexuality cannot be abstracted from its surrounding social layers." Several essays support the plasticity of sexual orientation. In an essay that sums up his new book, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, John D'Emilio shows how capitalism, and with it, the possibility of economic independence from the family, laid the groundwork for the emergence of a homosexual community—and identity. In a challenging counterpoint to D'Emilio, Adrienne Rich (the only cultural feminist contributor) suggests that for women, lesbianism may be natural and heterosexuality imposed by a patriarchal culture. Anne Bobroff's empirical study of Russian working women complements Rich's essay nicely, showing how folklore and courting patterns

serve to eroticize the prospect of marriage and, simultaneously, to undermine the bonds of friendship between young women. But if heterosexuality is "compulsory," as Rich argues, it is also powerfully compelling. The short stories by Myra Goldberg and Carole Rosenthal explore women's attraction even to men who are manifestly creeps, and Joan Nestle writes about her mother, a woman who "liked to fuck" and refused to be intimidated either by violent men or by "the women who don't walk my streets of loneliness and need."

If expressions of sexuality are variously constructed, so too are its uses. For women, sex has more often than not been instrumental to some other end, such as economic survival. Kathy Peiss tells us how turn-of-the-century working women used sex to win good times on the town, small gifts and even the

clothes they needed in order to work. Men too have used sex to raise the bottom line, as Barbara Omolade reminds us in a powerful essay (another potential book) on black women's sexual history: slave owners slept with black women not only to slake their lust but to insure the "natural increase," as the chilling expression went, of their labor force. Sex can be put to the service of procreation or profits or political force or desperate emotional need. It can "mean" almost anything, and, in that sense, it certainly is "socially constructed."

Yet to say that sex is socially constructed is to leave a lot unanswered. At the end of a revealing essay on sexism in contemporary sexology, anthropologist Carole Vance—who is as strict a social constructionist as they come—asks, "What is our paradigm of sexuality?" and demands not only moral and political but scientific answers. For if sex is socially constructed, we can't help wondering what it is constructed *out of*. What is the hidden substrate on which the social meanings are inscribed? Is it some friendly, playful impulse (a less hydraulic version of the Reichian drive), awaiting release from the tyranny of "meanings"? Or is it something we—or our rational, progressive daily selves—would rather not know about? Suppose, for example, that the confusion of "sex" and "gender" is not only linguistic, that sexuality is deeply gendered, as many feminists believe? Or suppose sexuality is nourished in a substructure that lies deeper than gender, where the terms are domination and submission, power and surrender? And if that is a possibility, should we even ask the question?

Powers of Desire is clear at least in its answer to that. As Jessica Benjamin writes in a difficult but brilliant essay entitled "Master and Slave: The Fantasy of Erotic Domination," "A politics that denies these issues [of power], that tries to sanitize or rationalize the erotic, fantastic components of human life, will not defeat domination, but only vacate the field." This is, of course, a field that most socialists and feminists fear to tread—but not the book's editors. In a provocative dialogue, Amber Hollibaugh and Cherrie Moraga, both lesbian feminists, talk about being "femme" and "butch"—the lesbian roles that most feminists have seen as atavistic artifacts of a gendered and heterosexist society. Heretically, Hollibaugh suggests that

SPEAKING IN BLIZZARDS

Fifty two consecutive days of snow.

Brother, I imagine you buried in snow.

The paper reports students jumping from windows into drifts at the sixth floor.

A character in a current magazine story says that a man's only female friend is his sister. His was long dead.

So I phone you, the noise on the line—
a fuzz, like snow on a T.V. screen
and believe I hear the wires under snow,
and see their imaginary criss-crosses
dipping a bit, between the lakes, at Buffalo.

When you answer your "oh, hello,"
a short trailed greeting, I am convinced
that your voice travels through snow
to reach the receiver, that a dense
absorbant snowpack swallows
your message. All I hear is silence,
diffuse, uncomfortable, and I wait for that slow
start of a rivulet when you finally make sense.

It was like this at home.
At the same dinner table, the same school,
we were never quite together, each below
the cramped snow of our house, each alone
for weeks till you'd come sit on the calico
quilt of our sister's bed at night, yawn,
and complain about Father, his temper or his rules.
We'd listen, in those late hours, and know
that you would begin the dream telling ritual,
meticulous details, your plots so logically sewn,
yet somehow a gift you did and didn't bestow.
Your isolated talk: a falling jewel
which parts it, then sinks invisibly into the snow.

power, or the playing out of power, may be intrinsic to eroticism—that it may be the issue that is “absolutely at the bottom of all sexual inquiry.” This is, at first, a threatening possibility, but Benjamin’s theoretical essay makes it plausible. Sexuality, she says, is forged in the same battle that defines the infant self as against the “other,” and is shaped by the primal tension between “differentiation” (individuation and power) and “continuity” (submergence, which can be transcendence or death). If this is the raw material out of which sexuality is constructed, it is heavy stuff indeed; and while we are not condemned to an obsessive replay of the infant power struggle (as in sadomasochism), neither can we be sure that sexuality does not have a strange and shadowed side.

There were times when I would have liked more guidance from the editors. They provide us with an introduction that is an important essay in its own right, and they accompany us from one contribution to another in an ever-reasonable, reassuring voice, but they never attempt to force the pieces into a single pattern or to answer the urgent moral question: If sex is socially constructed, how would we construct it? For surely the insistence on its plasticity

is an invitation to remold it in a more just and kindly way than history, so far, has done. Or do we even believe that sexuality should be consistent with the rest of life? Maybe the most moral solution is to set it off in a realm of play, unaccountable to politics and principles. Or maybe it is already too thick with meanings—love and danger, transcendence and pollution—ever to be the subject of pure play.

Snitow, Stansell and Thompson would say that it is just too soon for answers—and that, I think, is probably the best feminist “line” we have. After all, as they point out, ours is the first generation of women to have the means of separating sex reliably (if not always safely) from reproduction. We are also among the first generations of women to have the option of living—perhaps not well, but *living*—outside of marriage and economic dependence on men. Never before have large numbers of women glimpsed the possibility of sex without the ancient inscriptions of male dominance, heterosexuality, child-bearing and, with it, possible death. Men, from Michel Foucault to George (“Death of Sex”) Leonard, may think enough already has been said about sex, but we have just begun to speak. □

An Italian Kafka

RONALD DE FEO

CATASTROPHE AND OTHER STORIES. By Dino Buzzati. Translated by Judith Landry and Cynthia Jolly. Riverrun Press. 139 pp. \$9.95.

RESTLESS NIGHTS: Selected Stories of Dino Buzzati. Translated by Lawrence Venuti. North Point Press. 122 pp. Paper \$12.

While the work of Italo Calvino has been widely reviewed and praised in this country, that of Dino Buzzati, a fellow fantasist and countryman who died in 1972, has been largely ignored. The neglect is difficult to explain, even granting the fact that Calvino’s fiction is more aggressively modern, more resourceful and brighter in its outlook. For like many of Cal-

vino’s stories, Buzzati’s tales are notable for the odd, haunting little worlds they create and for their ability to tease and stimulate the mind. Cast in various forms—as parables, allegories, dialogues, fables, sci-fi tales and nightmarish fantasies—they most resemble Kafka’s fiction, though they tend to lack its complexity and introspective intensity. Indeed, Buzzati’s *The Tartar Steppe* (1945) is one of the few Kafkaesque novels that succeeds despite its obvious borrowings. The story of a professional soldier who spends a lifetime defending a remote fort from an enemy that never appears, it is grounded in an earthy realism that Kafka would have avoided, and thereby elicits from the reader a surprisingly sympathetic response to his hero’s ridiculous self-imposed trap.

Taken together, these two collections reveal Buzzati’s impressive range and inventiveness while also pointing to his limitations. *Catastrophe* is the more memorable, perhaps because the pieces are longer, more concentrated and less



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Ronald De Feo has written reviews and short stories for The New York Times Book Review, The New Republic, Hudson Review and other magazines.

Four Poems

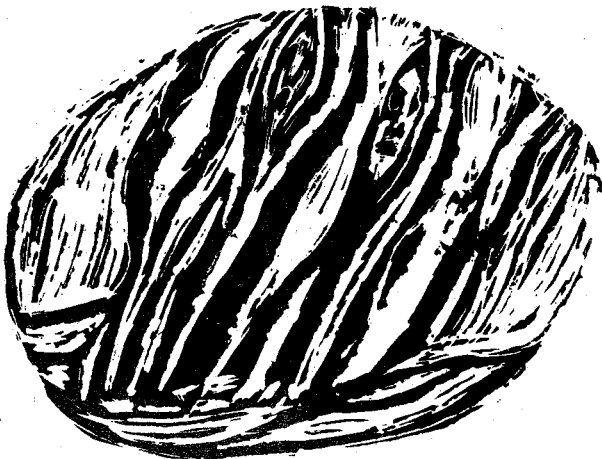
The Russian poet Velimir Khlebnikov (1885-1921), Futurist, friend of Mayakovsky and Malevich, contemporary of Pound and Joyce, was one of the great poetic explorers of the twentieth century. Paul Schmidt, translator of *Arthur Rimbaud: Complete Works* (Harper & Row), is currently translating Khlebnikov's complete writings, from which these poems are taken.

I

Night's color breeding darker blues
Drifts over everything, all of it worthy of love,
And one called out, the sound of it oppressive,
Sobbing, full of the anguish of evening.
A moment once, when golden light,
Three stars, flamed in boats on the water,
And when a lonely Thuya-tree
Moved its branches over a grave-stone.
A moment once, when giants bound
Scarlet turbans upon their heads,
And the wayward surge of the sea-winds,
Wonderful, never knowing why.
A moment once, when fishermen's voices
Echoed the words of Odysseus,
And beyond the swell in the distance
An upward wing, above the sea-wave hovering.

II

Water eats at the ash-grove
Roots, flows still near the shadowy trees.
The wind wavers at odd
Or even. Nets hang still by the weir.
Perspiration blurs the hazy air.
In a place that had never heard of grief
A brooding sunburnt boy grew up.
A girl grew up beside him.
Night-time reeds on the bank shiver
And weeds in the water tremble,
And some tall, white-faced figure
Stands near the trees, indistinguishable.



III

Once more, once more
I am
Your star.
Woe to the sailor with level
And compass
Whose angle is false
He will wreck on rocks
And hidden shoals.
Woe to you without love
Or compassion
Who angled me false.
You will wreck on rocks
And the rocks will laugh
at you
the way you did
at me.

IV

Let the plowman leave his furrow
To watch the crow that flies across his field
And let him say: that cry contains
The fall of Troy,
Achilles' howling anger
And the weeping queen.
As it circles (its jaws
Are black) above his head,
On a dusty table—let there be lots of dust,
And let the dust form circles, curves
Like the gray insides of a wave,
And let some schoolboy say: that dust
Is Moscow, there, and that's
Peking, or a cowfield near Chicago.
Capital cities have circled the earth
In the eye of a fisherman's net.
The leavings of empire are intended
To tie up earth in knots of dust.
And let a bride, who would not want to see
Mourning bands beneath her fingernails,
Scrape the dust from under them and murmur:
Here in this dust burn living suns
And worlds no mind dares comprehend.
Her nails wear shrouds of dying flesh.
I believe that even the light of Sirius must fail
To pierce the dark beneath a fingernail.

Velimir Khlebnikov
(Translated by Paul Schmidt)

playful. The volume is aptly titled; many of the tales deal with disaster, some personal, others caused by nature, still others brought about by social conditioning or political upheaval. Yet Buzzati rarely concentrates on the catastrophe itself, focusing instead on his characters' reactions to it, particularly on their anticipation of the terrible event. By suggesting horror rather than blatantly presenting it, Buzzati captures the quintessential modern sense of imminent yet vague doom. In the title story, a traveler views from a train window throngs of people fleeing from an unspecified danger toward which he is heading. In "The Landslide," a reporter is sent to cover the story of a landslide that has supposedly devastated an entire village, but when he arrives at the scene he finds nothing. Repeatedly frustrated in his inquiries, he is about to leave when he hears rumbling in the distance. So geared up is he for tragedy that the ominous noise fills his heart "with an indescribable excitement strangely similar to joy."

Although Buzzati's characters react to potential danger in various ways, denial is the most common response. The rich Signora Gron of "And Yet They Are Knocking at Your Door" ignores the flood waters pouring through her house, while the Goggi family of "The Monster" cannot accept their governess's discovery of a monster in their attic. At first, the absurdly, tragically forgetful mother in "Oversight" tries to convince herself that before traveling to the country she did indeed leave her 4-year-old daughter with an aunt, but then uncertainty begins to plague her: "She could remember nothing of how they had left the house, nor of their actual journey, nor their goodbyes. It was as if a gaping hole had opened in her memory." The fullest treatment of building anxiety comes in "The Scala Scare," a lengthy, delightfully observed story about the premiere of a controversial work at Milan's renowned opera house and the widespread revolt that it might spark. Here Buzzati goes beyond the purely psychological to create character, giving us a colorful portrait of a former pianist who has made the opera house his second home and who clings to a now-threatened world of elegance and art.

The very short stories in *Restless Nights* are more varied in their themes, but at times they are a bit gimmicky and anecdotal. In "The Scandal on Via

Sesostri," the death of a prominent doctor results in revelations about the sordid pasts of the doctor, his prosperous neighbors and the police inspector—all of whom have been using aliases for years. Just as contrived is "The Saucer Has Landed," in which a priest talks with a Martian and discovers that human imperfection is preferable to the dullness of the sinless Martian society. Even in those instances, however, Buzzati's humanity, humor and obvious affection for his material compensate for its thinness. Similarly, "The Eiffel Tower," which tells of men constructing a tower far higher than the one we know, is little more than a fantastic anecdote, yet in its description of the truncated project, the shattered dream, it is unexpectedly affecting and resonant.

On occasion the ghost of Kafka is too strongly felt in these two collections. "The Seven Messengers," "The Opening of the Road" and "The Walls of Anagoor," all dealing with impossible goals, are beautifully conceived and written, but are so imitative that they hardly seem original. However, with "Seven Floors" (from *Catastrophe*) Buzzati manages to create a nightmare of illness and bureaucracy that Kafka himself might have envied. Here Buzzati traces the terrible journey of Giovanni Corte, an ailing man who enters a hospital that houses its patients according to the gravity of their condition, with the top floor devoted to the mildest cases and the ground floor to the hopelessly sick. As the once mildly ill man descends, we are made to share the frustration and terror of his predicament. His last thin link with society is broken when from a ground-floor window his view of the city is obscured by trees:

Stretched out on his bed, while the afternoon warmth flowed calmly over the city, he would stare at the green of the trees through the window and feel that he had come to a completely unreal world, walled in with sterilised tiles, full of deathly arctic passages and soulless white figures. It even occurred to him that the trees he thought he saw through the window were not real: finally, when he noticed that the leaves never moved, he was certain of it.

At his best, as here, Buzzati is horribly moving. And even in his lesser tales he can, like his master, surprise us with his off-center, disturbing views of our mad, anxiety-ridden age. □

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THE EMPIRE'S OLD CLOTHES: What the Lone Ranger, Babar, and Other Innocent Heroes Do to Our Minds. By Ariel Dorfman. Pantheon. 225 pp. \$14.95. Paper \$6.95.

In the late 1960s a joke made the rounds in American grade schools. Surrounded by hostile Indians, the Lone Ranger turns to Tonto: "Looks like we're done for, pardner." "What do you mean we, paleface?"

In *The Empire's Old Clothes* Ariel Dorfman has sought to make sense of this and other apparent ephemeras of popular culture, mass market children's literature in particular. Why are there uncles but no mothers and fathers in Donald Duck stories? Why is Babar the elephant so interested in elevators? Why does the *Reader's Digest* unflinchingly personify distant lands ("China Goes Shopping")? And who was that masked man?

The Lone Ranger first appeared on the radio in the early 1930s, faithfully drawing order out of chaos within his assigned half-hour. He was meant to be "the embodiment of a granted prayer," his creator, George Trendle, once explained, adding that he had conceived of Tonto as someone who would "talk little, contribute much." Silver, the white horse, was a wild stallion who had voluntarily given up his freedom in response to the Ranger's kindness, a detail which nicely conferred upon each episode the approbation of nature itself.

In "The Lone Ranger" dramas the masked man typically appears when local law enforcement has broken down. Fate having supplied him with his own silver mine, he serves entirely *pro bono publico*. Essentially peaceful, he is willing to resort to the gun when necessary. "There is only one force in the historical world," announces Dorfman, whose features "are presented in the same way: the State."

The Ranger is a creature of his times, it seems; his tale, a fable of industrialized democracy under stress. Superheroes have been with us in all ages, Dorfman acknowledges, but only dur-

ing the Great Depression did a kind of hero emerge who, while remarkably endowed, could simultaneously represent the average citizen. Take Superman (1938): every time he puts on his glasses his powers are democratized, and when he steps into the phone booth, *l'État c'est moi*. Lone Ranger stories usually begin with a confusion as to his identity: an apparently suspicious and alienated individual turns out to be a selfless servant with a lightning draw. An apparently incompetent and distant government turns out to be offering a New Deal. Who was that man in the wheelchair?

Not only is this Ranger the state, Dorfman contends, but as the state has changed so has he. He enjoyed great popularity in the late 1930s; by the end of World War II he was busy arresting German spies unaccountably at large in the Wild West. And in the 1960s, well, by the end of the 1960s the state had lost its luster. People of color were less willing to "talk little, contribute much." In his homeland the Lone Ranger became a grade school joke, though comic book versions of his adventures continue to sell well in the Third World.

Ariel Dorfman is a Chilean, now living in this country. His interest in "industrialized works of fiction" goes back to the days when he was a professor of journalism and literature in Chile during the Allende period. Several ideas motivate his argument: that mass-produced fictions teach us "how not to rebel," that they colonize their readers and, because "the world of children . . . constitutes the axis of all processes of domination," that children's literature and "infantilized" adult literature "form the basis for the entire process of cultural domination."

Unfortunately, Dorfman's discussion of the Lone Ranger is the best moment in this frustrating group of essays. As the faint trumpets of his style reveal, he has issued himself stern marching orders. They sometimes lead him to interesting readings, but more often they lead him to arbitrary and silly conclusions. He notices, for example, that in Disney's comics the adults (the adult ducks, that is) tend to be foolish, while the children are wise and capable. But shall we then say, "In seeing adults stripped of the mask of superiority, these fables allow their young readers a valuable respite from powerlessness," or shall we say, "Once the child iden-

tifies with other children who are really adults he participates in his own self-domination"? I made up the first sentence; the second is Dorfman's. Arbitrary and silly.

Dorfman repeatedly calls on fables to be something that is not in their nature. Above all, he wishes they revealed a fuller sense of contemporary history. Isn't it true that the Babar stories leave out the racism that has marked Europe's relationship to Africa? Hasn't the development Babar brings his people historically led to ecological disaster? Isn't it the case that Walt Disney never offered "an authentic critique on the origin of [Scrooge] McDuck's wealth"? That all those things are true does not amount to a critique of the works in question. My cat has never washed the dishes, but that is not a good critique of my cat.

As I read this book, I longed for Dorfman to enliven the argument by bringing in something that didn't fit his assumptions. Why not look at some recent socialist fictions? (In the Chinese fiction-for-the-masses that I have read, the state is so busy it makes the Lone Ranger seem positively withered away.) Why not compare "industrialized fictions" to pre-industrial fairy tales? Having told us how the Lone Ranger's altruism wins his horse's loyalty, Dorfman sternly concludes that this "steed emerged from nature in order to advance the cause of justice and never to destroy private property." Yes, yes. But stories of helpful animals responding to human virtue predate such talk by thousands of years. Silver is probably not of the same genus as the silver horses in the Brothers Grimm, but to differentiate them requires a taxonomist more skilled than Dorfman.

The main thing missing from this book, though, is a sense of who reads the tales and why. No mythology can colonize the imagination unless it has some appeal, but no feeling for the attractiveness of these works appears in Dorfman's essays. Babar and the *Reader's Digest* I have never cared for, but I used to love Scrooge McDuck, partly for the kick of fantasizing about unlimited wealth and partly to watch the playing out of the utopian joke that fantasy contains (and which even children intuitively understand): What would happen to cash if you were freed from the assumption of scarcity? When Dorfman points out that "laborers, workers, and peasants . . . are inaudible in the world of Disney," or that Huey, Dewey

Lewis Hyde is the author of *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* (Random House).

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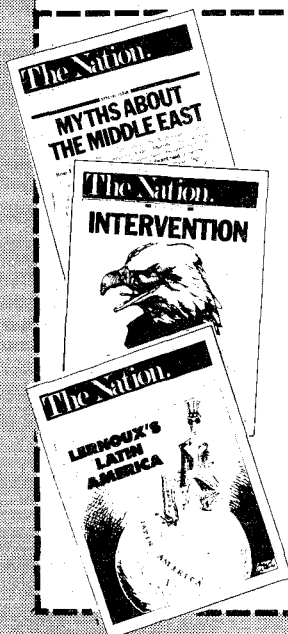
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and Louie never get sick, we have to admit his point, but we do not sense he has any sympathy for the entranced child-reader. That reader has been squeezed out by politics. That I share much of the politics in question only made *The Empire's Old Clothes* more of a disappointment. □

BOOK NOTES.

AGAINST STRAIGHT LINES: Alone in Labrador. *By Robert Perkins. Atlantic-Little Brown. 191 pp. \$15.95.* The avid armchair traveler demands at least three things from a travel writer: evocative description, a sense of adventure and a sympathetic protagonist. Although Robert Perkins fails to deliver completely on the first two in this account of his canoe trip across Canada's wild Labrador Peninsula, he does come across as a likable, offbeat student of nature, who sets up a plastic flamingo lawn ornament at the edge of his camp. Too often he descends into existential Zen kitsch, but he leaves the woods with a practical philosophy, inspired by having to carry his canoe over a five-mile stretch: "I've learned to give ground and to be prepared to spin around a lot."

RED & WHITE: Indian Views of the White Man 1492-1982. *By Annette Rosenstiel. Universe Books. 192 pp. \$14.95.* When whites began arriving in the New World, few thought to record how Native Americans regarded their visitors from across the Atlantic. But once they started, they found impressions that were "trenchant, vivid and insightful." An Aztec in 1519 commented of the conquistadors: "They picked up the gold and fingered it like monkeys; they seemed to be transported by joy. . . . Their bodies swelled with greed, and their hunger was ravenous. They hungered like pigs for the gold." Annette Rosenstiel gives us Chief Joseph on treaties ("Words do not pay for my dead people"); Geronimo on his public image problem ("I think I was a good man, but in the papers all over the world they say I was a bad man. . . . I never do wrong without a cause"); and Sitting Bull on the promises of the U.S. government ("All that we realized out of our agreements with the Great Father was we are dying off"). Despite its frustratingly fragmented structure, this collection offers a harsh indictment of the white conquerors and a moving plea for

understanding—both in the words of the victims.

LA CHARCA. *By Manuel Zeno-Gandía. Translated by Kal Wagenheim. Waterfront Press. 216 pp. \$18.95. Paper \$10.* This is the first English translation of a classic of Latin American fiction—the opening volume of Manuel Zeno-Gandía's tetralogy depicting life in Puerto Rico. Originally published in 1894, the novel explores the desperate lives of the country people, oppressed by poverty, disease and colonial rule. (In peasant argot, *una charca* is a stagnant pond.) The plot juxtaposes the pleasant life of a rich plantation owner with that of Silvina, a young peasant who unknowingly suffers from epilepsy and who dreams of escaping her wretched husband. Zeno-Gandía is too much of a social realist to give her a chance: after a series of tragedies she dies of a seizure, "the sinner without sin, the guilty without guilt." Wagenheim's translation is modern and colloquial, his editing (he promises) light.

KARL MARX REMEMBERED: Comments at the Time of His Death. *Edited by Philip S. Foner. Synthesis Publications. 304 pp. \$8.95.* This collection of letters, memorials and news articles pieces together an intriguing portrait of Marx as seen by his contemporaries. *The Times* of London pronounces him "obnoxious"; the New York anarchist paper *Freiheit* calls him "the trailblazer of a new science"; the Paris paper *Le Citoyen et La Bataille* claims he was "the most perfect revolutionary genius of our time"; *Neue Zeit*, the only Socialist publication in Germany, cries, "He was a Man!" The voices here come predominantly from the left and carry a single message—one that Philip Foner finds true a hundred years later—"Karl Marx lives!"

SCREW: A Guard's View of Bridge-water State Hospital. *By Tom Ryan, with Bob Casey. South End Press. 161 pp. \$7.* During his eighteen months as a guard at a state hospital for the criminally insane, Tim Ryan recorded numerous shocking instances of abuse and neglect of the inmates, known officially as "patients." In fact, that term and the description "state hospital" are both Orwellian misnomers, for as Ryan shows, the prisoners receive no treatment of any kind. Instead they are subjected to the sadistic whims of

the guards, or in inmate parlance, "screws." In one particularly "psetting incident, an inmate taunted by a guard tears out his own left eye. In a simple declarative style, Ryan depicts the methods used to dehumanize these wards of the state, such as restricting access to toilets, and examines with insight the mentality of his fellow guards. Though the book is short on analysis—found only in the nine pages at the end relating Bridgewater to larger problems of economics and criminal justice—it succeeds in its mission: to open eyes and spark indignation.

PARLIAMENT, PEOPLE & POWER: Agenda for a Free Society. By *Tony Benn*. Verso Editions. 160 pp. \$17.50. Paper \$6.50. "The storm-centre of British politics today is the Labour Party," declares the book's jacket. And "Tony Benn is the foremost representative of the party's new socialist left." Given the recent British elections, in which Benn lost his seat in Parliament, this series of interviews with *New Left Review*, conducted in March and June of 1982, is bound to seem dated. But it is still useful for its history of the Labor Party and examination of Benn's views on the applicability of socialism to modern Britain. Benn is often eloquent and inspiring, but what is even more refreshing is to have such a thorough statement of the politics and philosophy of any one politician. This is certainly no campaign quickie.

TROUBLESOME BUSINESS: The Labour Party and the Irish Question. By *Geoffrey Bell*. Pluto Press. 168 pp. \$8.95. Since Bobby Sands's fatal hunger strike in 1981, the Labor Party has adopted a somewhat sympathetic approach to Irish unity, but Geoffrey Bell chronicles the party's stand on this issue since its founding in 1900 and finds it full of hypocrisy. Labor, he shows, has juggled its commitment to majority rule, to reform through parliamentary institutions and to the interests of the British state. The result: "compromise . . . and fudging." Such a course, Bell maintains, was doomed from the start, because "there is little evidence that there is a navigable middle way in Ireland." His account is convincing, although he does turn this single issue into an ideological yardstick, suggesting that Labor's dismal record on Ireland calls into question its overall commitment to socialism.

—David Corn

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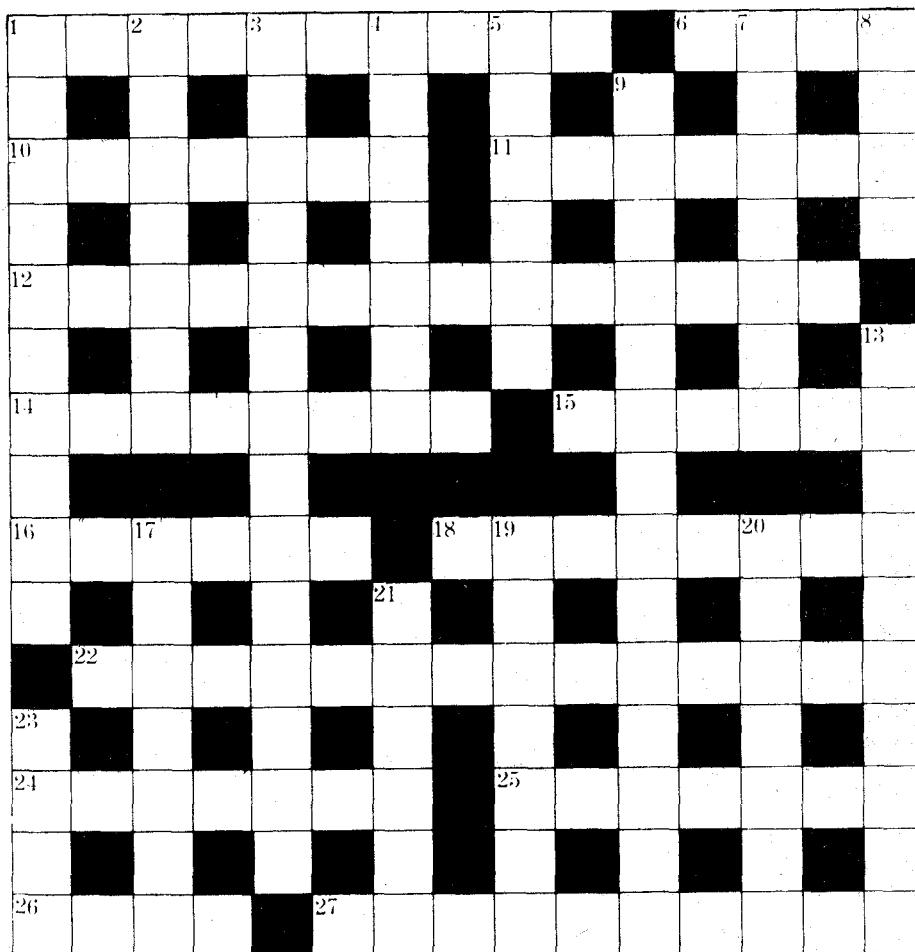
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ACROSS

- 1 What pot isn't? One makes knots—and they may be only observances. (10)
- 6 Have the last word, perhaps, with the wrong name for it. (4)
- 10 And this might describe pot, too. (7)
- 11 You might get a lot of this with an ax, or a picture of it. (7)
- 12 Does it take guts to be so healthy? (2,3,2,1,6)
- 14 With the sound of a bell, 6 might be changing things—noon, perhaps. (8)
- 15 Proving the actor is not quite so far along as commercial product X, as they say. (6)
- 16 Is there a point to a missile being limited? (6)
- 18 Leave the main body—flip-flop fits! (5,3)
- 22 Double piano might describe this—but many merchants put store in it! (8,6)
- 24 More than a few drops in a good place to drive from, but one learns! (7)
- 25 Might a liner stick to it? (3,4)
- 26 Service of the state, in short. (It's now officially much shorter.) (4)
- 27 The coats they put on are probably white. (10)

DOWN

- 1 Where there is a deficiency and a pale article finally brought up. (10)
- 2 One has an odd gaffer about, of an extremely tall type. (7)
- 3 Not many visitors implied for such a firm undertaking in England! (Liability might be restricted.) (7,7)

- 4 Appends something, but OKs can't quite make it. (5,2)
- 5 One has to have been married to have one we fix improperly, but to the point. (2-4)
- 7 Some people have the beginnings of children mixed up in them, in a sort of lace. (7)
- 8 An uprising of a minor British institution, one might so observe. (4)
- 9 The legal squabble connected with "54-40 or fight"? (10,4)
- 13 Job-related hand-holders? (They weren't the downy type!) (10)
- 17 As there might be a difference, sets things back to fire again. (7)
- 19 Little Margaret, like you and me, might have an association with Muses and poetry. (7)
- 20 Power failure about the river head is a real shock! (7)
- 21 A father-to-son relationship might be all mixed up about one quarter. (6)
- 23 A rising team might be the opposite of stern. (4)

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